

# THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

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Carità.

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## PART I.

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE BERESFORDS.



AMES BERESFORD and Annie his wife had been married for more than a dozen years—their only child, indeed, had nearly attained the age of twelve at the time when this history begins. They had both got footing on that plateau of middle age which, if it comes to something like level ground at thirty, need not think of a descending step for twenty years—the time of the greatest enjoyments and most solid progress of life. He was at one end and she at the other of the first decade; the one approaching the forties, the other scarcely well out of the twenties; both ready to laugh at the advance of years, which was as yet but a joke to them, and neither having thought of bidding any grave farewell to youth. She was impulsive, enthusiastic and nervous; he philosophical and speculative, a man ready to discuss any theory in earth or heaven, and without any prejudices such as might make one subject of discussion appear less legitimate than another. They were not very rich, but neither were they poor in any sense of the word. He had been called to the Bar, but had never gone any further in that

career. They had enough between them to live on without show, but without pinching, as so many people of quietly social, semi-literary tastes do in London. They knew a number of people. They saw all the pictures, read all the books, and heard all the music that was going; not absorbed in any art, but with just enough devotion to all to make their life full and pleasant. And there could scarcely be a pleasanter life. The fantasies of youth, but not the sentiment of youth, had ended for both. Mr. Beresford had some mildly scientific pursuits, was a member of some learned societies, and of one or two new and advanced clubs where clever men were supposed to abound. Occasionally in his comfortable library he wrote an article for a review or magazine, which was very much talked about by his friends, to the great edification and amusement of people who live by writing articles and say nothing about them. This gave him an agreeable sense of duty to add seriousness to his life; and he was never without occupation—meetings of committees, scraps of semi-public business, educational and other projects, which, for the moment at least, seemed full of interest to the world—made him feel himself a not unimportant, certainly not a useless, man. Mrs. Beresford, on her side, had the natural occupation of her housekeeping, and her child, whose education gave her much thought—so much thought that many people with full nurseries listened with a certain awe to her ideas of all that was necessary for her little girl, and sighed to think how much less was possible when there were six or seven little girls to think of. The child, however, was not so over-educated and over-cared for as might have been fancied; for the parents were young, as I have said, very fond of each other, and fond of their own way; which attachments did not consist with the burden of dragging a small child with them wherever they went. The Beresfords liked to go about “honeymooning,” as their friends called it, and as they themselves were not displeased to call it, by themselves, over the world. They would start sometimes quite suddenly, to the Riviera in the middle of winter, to escape London fogs and wintry chills; to Paris at Easter; to Scotland in the autumn; even to Norway sometimes, or such difficult places: and it stood to reason that they could not take the child with them when they started quite suddenly on these delightful journeys. For these journeys were delightful. They were well enough off not to require to count the cost; they went lightly, with little luggage and no servants; and they went everywhere together. But it would have been bad for the little girl; therefore she stayed at home, under the care of the best of nurses, who had been Mrs. Beresford’s nurse before the child’s; and the father and mother, like two lovers, roamed lightly about the world. But when they were at home, Mrs. Beresford talked a great deal about education, and had plans enough to have educated six princesses, let alone one little girl of undistinguished lineage. It was a very lucky thing for all parties, their friends said, that they had but this one child. Had they been hampered by half-a-dozen, what could they have done? It would have changed their life completely. And

one of their many felicities was, that whereas they were preserved from the old-maidishness of childless married persons by having a child, their freedom of action was preserved by the fact that they had but one.

And they were wonderfully free of other relations who might have hampered them. Mrs. Beresford had been an orphan from her childhood, brought up by her grandmother, who in the course of nature was dead too; and Mr. Beresford's only two relations were a wealthy aunt, Charity Beresford, who lived in a pretty house in the country, within driving distance of London, and with whom lived his elder sister, Cherry Beresford, named after her aunt, and living in considerable subjugation to that energetic woman. Miss Beresford was the richest member of the family, and her nephew had expectations from her; and Charity was the favourite female name of this branch of the race. But the idea of calling her child Charity did not at all smile upon young Mrs. Beresford when her baby was born. She was beguiled, however, by the unusual look of it, which charmed her into calling the little girl by the more melodious name of Carità, contracted prettily into Cara in the drawing-room, and Carry in the nursery. Aunt Charity growled when she heard of it, but did not otherwise complain, and gentle Aunt Cherry declared herself unfeignedly glad that her little niece had thus escaped the worse consequences of a symbolical name. When the young couple went away pleasuring, little Cara very often would be sent to Sunninghill, to pass the quiet days there under the charge of the aunts; and so all responsibility was removed from the minds of the parents. They had a letter sent to them every day to assure them of her welfare, however far off they might go—an extravagance which Aunt Charity condemned loudly, but which Aunt Cherry was proud of, as showing the devotion of the parents to little Cara. The child herself was very happy at Sunninghill, and was a much more prominent person there than at home, where very often she was in the way, and interrupted conversation. For a father and mother who are very fond of each other, and have a great deal to talk of, often, it must be allowed, are hampered by the presence of one curious child, with quick ears and an inconveniently good memory. In this particular the half-dozen would have been more easily managed than the one.

Thus the Beresfords led a very pleasant life. They had the prettiest house; naturally, travelling so much as they did, they had been able to "pick up" a great many charming things. You could scarcely see their walls for pictures; some very good, one or two wonderful windfalls, and the rest pretty enough; nothing strikingly bad, or next to nothing. Where other people had ordinary china, they had genuine old faience, and one or two plaques which Raphael himself might have seen perhaps—Urbino ware, with Messer Giorgio's name upon it. Not to speak of the Venice point which Mrs. Beresford wore, there were brackets in the drawing-room hung with scraps of old *point coupé* which many a lady would have been glad to trim her dress with; and, instead of common *portières*, they had two pieces of old tapestry from an Italian convent which devotees went

down on their knees before. But I have not space to tell you how many pretty things they had. It was one of the pleasures of their life whenever they saw anything that pleased them to bring it home for the decoration of that pretty drawing-room, or the library, which Mr. Beresford had filled with old vellum-bound volumes of curious editions, and pretty books in Russia leather which kept the room always fragrant. What was wanting to this pleasant, warm, full, delightful living? Nothing but continuance; and it had not struck either of them that there was any doubt of this for long, long years at least. What a long way off threescore years and ten look when you are not yet forty! and death looked further off still. No one thought of dying. Why should they? For, to be sure, though we know very well that must happen to us sometimes, in our hearts we are incredulous, and do not believe that *we* ever can die. The Beresfords never dreamt of anything so frightful. They were well, they were happy, they were young; and as it had been, so it would be; and a world so bright they felt must mean to go on for ever.

When Cara was about ten, however, the mother began to feel less well than usual. There was nothing much the matter with her, it was thought: want of "tone"—a little irritability of disposition—a nervous temperament. What she wanted was change of air and scene. And she got that, and got better, as was thought; but then became ill again. No, not ill—unwell, indisposed, *mal à son aise*, nothing more. There was nothing the matter with her really, the doctors thought. Her lungs and her heart, and all vital organs, were perfectly sound; but there was a little local irritation which, acting upon a nervous temperament—the nervous temperament was perpetually kept in the front, and all sorts of evils imputed to its agency. At Sunninghill, it must be confessed, they did not believe in the illness at all.

"Fudge," said Aunt Charity, who had always been strong, and had no faith in nerves, "don't talk to me of your nervous temperaments. I know what it means. It means that Annie has fallen sick of always having her own way. She has everything she can desire, and she is ill of having nothing more to wish for. A case of Alexander over again in a London drawing-room—that's what it is, and nothing else, my word upon it; and I know my niece."

"Yes, Mr. Maxwell, perhaps there is some truth in what Aunt Charity says," said Miss Cherry. "I think you know I don't judge harshly—"

"That means that I judge harshly," said Miss Charity, bursting in; "thank you, my dear. Well, you may call me uncharitable if you please; but there's where it is; let James lose the half of his fortune, or all his china get broken, and she'd come round in no time—that's what ails Annie. But as she belongs to a very refined society, and has a silly husband, it's called nerves. Bless me, Cherry, I hope I knew what nerves were, and all about it, before you were born."

"You could not know Annie before I was born," said Miss Cherry,



who was devoid of imagination. "I hope you will give her your best attention, Mr. Maxwell. My brother James is a very fond husband, poor fellow! If anything happened to Annie, he would never get the better of it. As for marrying again, or anything of that sort——"

"Good heavens," said the doctor; "I hope there is no need to take such an idea into consideration. We must not go so fast."

Miss Charity laughed. She was a great deal older than her niece, but much more sensible. "There's the seventh commandment to be thought of," she said; for her remarks were sometimes more free than they ought to be, and put Miss Cherry to the blush: and this was all the worse because she immediately walked out into the garden through the open window and left the younger lady alone with the doctor, who was an old friend of the family, and contemporary of the second Charity Beresford. Very old friends they were; even it was supposed that in their youth there had been or might have been passages of sentiment between these two now sitting so calmly opposite each other. Dr. Maxwell, however, by this time was a widower, and not at all sentimental. He laughed too as Miss Beresford made her exit by the window. He was very well used to the family and all its ways.

"*She* wears very well," he said reflectively. "I don't think she has aged to speak of for these twenty years. When I used to be coming here in my early days, when I was beginning practice——"

"The rest of us have changed very much since then."

"Yes," said Dr. Maxwell, thinking most of himself; "but she not at all. I could think when I look at her that I was still, as I say, a young fellow beginning practice——"

Miss Cherry sighed—very softly, but still she did sigh: over forty, but still in the position and with many of the sentiments of a girl. People laugh at the combination, but it is a touching one on the whole. What ages of lingering monotonous life had passed over her since her present companion began his practice, since her Aunt Charity had begun to be an old woman! Dr. Maxwell had married, had lost his wife, had gone through perhaps sharper troubles than Miss Cherry had known. He was now middle-aged and stoutish and weather-beaten—weather-beaten in aspect and in soul—while she was slim and soft and maidenly still. The sigh was half for those uneventful years, and half for the undevelopment which she was conscious of—the unchangedness of herself, underneath the outer guise, which was changed; but this was not safe ground, nor could it be talked of. So she brushed away the sigh with a little cough, and added quickly:—

"I know perhaps what nerves are better than my aunt does, and I know Annie better. Tell me seriously, Mr. Maxwell, now we are alone. You don't apprehend anything serious? Should she go on travelling and running about as they do, if there is really anything the matter? No one can be so much interested as I am. You would be quite frank with me?"

"It is the best thing for her," said the doctor. "You now—I should

not say the same for you. You are a tranquil person and patient ; but for her, the more she runs about the better. It distracts her and keeps her from thinking. If she worries, it's all over with a woman like that."

"She has so little to worry about."

"Just so ; and the less one has to bear the less one is fit for ; that is to say," said the doctor, getting up and going to the window, "the less some people are fit for. There's that old aunt of yours to prove me a fool. She has never had anything to bear, that I know of ; and she is strong enough to bear anything. Sixty-eight, and just look at her. There's a physique for you—that is the kind of woman," Mr. Maxwell said, with a little outburst of professional enthusiasm, "that I admire—as straight as-a rod still, and every faculty in good order. That a woman like that should never have married is a loss to the world."

Miss Cherry, who had gone to the window too, and stood by his side, looked out somewhat wistfully at her old aunt. Cherry was not like her, but took after the other side of the family, her own mother, who had died young, and had not possessed any physique to speak of. "It is very sweet to-day in the garden," she said, inconsequently, and stepped out into the world of flowers and sunshine. Sunninghill was an ideal house for two ladies, a place which people who were shut out from such delights considered quite enough for happiness. Indeed, Miss Cherry Beresford's friends in general resented deeply the little plaintive air she sometimes took upon her. "What could she wish for more?" they said, indignantly ; "a place that was just too good to be wasted on two single women. There should be a family in it." This was especially the sentiment of the rector's wife, who was a friend of Cherry's, and who felt it a personal slight to herself, who had a large family and many cares, when Cherry Beresford, with not a thing in the world to trouble her, presumed to look as if she was not quite happy. The house stood upon a hill, fringed round with small but delightful woods. These woods were on a level with the highest turrets of the great beautiful royal Castle of St. George, which lay full within sight in the afternoon sunshine. So you may imagine what a view it was which was visible from the old smooth velvet lawn round the house, which formed the apex to these woods. The quiet plain all around lay basking in the light underneath, and the Castle upon its hill dominated, with a broad and placid grandeur, that majestic sweep of country, with all its lights and shadows. The royal flag fluttered on the breeze, the great tower rose grey and solid against the sky. Green branches framed in this picture on every side ; the cuttings in the trees made a picture-gallery indeed of different views for different hours, according to the lights. "What a lovely place it is !" Mr. Maxwell said, with sudden enthusiasm ; "I always forget how lovely it is till I come back."

"Yes, it is beautiful," said Cherry, who was used to it. "If you are going to send them away, I suppose Cara may come to us for the summer?—that makes such a difference." Cherry was very well used to the different lights. She acknowledged the beauty of her home, and yet

I can fancy circumstances under which she would have liked a pretty little house in a street better. Man nor woman either cannot live by beauty alone any more than by bread.

"Here's a pretty business," said Miss Beresford briskly; "half of my roses, I believe, spoiled for this year; no second show this time. Jones is the greatest idiot; he pretends to know everything, and he knows nothing. Your *protégé*, Cherry, of course. All the incapables hang on by you."

"I can't see any signs of deficiency," said the doctor, looking round.

"Not at this moment; if there were, he should go on the spot. If those two go off again, as you are always sending them off, tell James I insist on the child coming here. Ah, that's what your women of nervous temperament do—leave their children at home in a poky London square, while they go wandering over the world. Tell them I wish it," said Miss Beresford, with a laugh; "they never go against me."

"They know how kind you always are."

"They know I'm old and will have something to leave behind me, that's the plain English—as if I was going to accept poor Cherry's subjection, poor soul, without rewarding her for it. It is she who will have everything when I'm gone. I've told them that, but still they think there's a chance that Cara might cut her old aunt out. I can see through them. I see through most people," she added, with a laugh, looking at him full. How could she know the thought passing through his mind at the moment, which was the abrupt reflection, uncalled for perhaps, that for a professional man, who had made no extraordinary name in his profession, Cherry Beresford, though an old maiden, would make not such a bad wife? Could the old witch see through broadcloth, and the comfortable coating of middle-aged flesh and blood, straight into a man's heart? He grew red foolishly, as if that were possible, and stammered a little in his reply:

"I can believe everything that is clever of you as well as everything that is kind; though why you ladies should make such a point of having a little chit like that, who can only disturb your quiet in this paradise of a place——"

"Oh, how can you say so!" said Cherry. "The child's voice and the child's face make all the difference—they are better than sunshine. They make the place beautiful. I would give it all, twenty times over, to have the child."

"Whom her mother is very glad to leave behind her."

"Hold your tongue, Cherry," said the elder lady; "you mild little old maids, you are always in a way about children. I never took up that line. A child in the abstract is a nuisance. Now, a man—there are advantages about a man. Sometimes he's a nuisance too, but sometimes he's a help. Believe them, and they'll tell you that marriage was always far from their thoughts, but that children are their delight. That's not my way of thinking. But I happen to like little Cara because she is

Cara, not because she is a child. So she may come and take her chance with the rest."

Cherry had turned away along the garden path, and was looking through one of the openings at one of the views. She knew it by heart—exactly how the light fell, and where were the shadows, and the name of every tower, and almost the shape of every cloud. Was it wonderful that this was not so delightful to her as to the strangers who could not see that view every day in their lives? To some people, indeed, the atmospheric changes, the effects of wind and colour, the warnings and dispersions of those clouds, would have made poetry enough to fill up all that was wanting; but poor Miss Cherry was not poetical in this big way, though she was very fond of pretty verses, and even wrote some occasionally; but how she longed for the child's innocent looks—the child's ceaseless prattle! Her gentle delicacy was hurt at that unnecessary gibe about the old-maidishness, and her supposed sham rejection of the husband who had never come that way. "Why should she talk of men—especially before *him*? What do I want with men?" said poor Miss Cherry to herself; "but my own niece—my brother's child—surely I may wish for her." And surely there could not have been a more innocent wish.

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## CHAPTER II.

### A FRIGHT.

"WHICH you please; you are not gouty or rheumatical, or anything of that sort," said Mr. Maxwell, almost gaily. "Homburg, for instance—Homburg would do—or Baden, if you prefer that. I incline to the one you prefer; and enjoy yourself as much as you can—that is my prescription. Open air, novelty, change; and if you find you don't relish one place, go to another. The sea, if you take a fancy for the sea; and Sir William is of my opinion exactly. Choose the place which amuses you most."

"It seems to me," said Mr. Beresford, "that these wise men are laughing at you, Annie. They know there's nothing the matter with you. If I was not much obliged to them for thinking so, I should say you had some reason to be offended. One knows what you doctors mean when you tell a patient to do whatever she likes best."

"It means one of two things," said Mrs. Beresford; "either that it is nothing, or that it is hopeless—"

Her husband burst into a soft laugh. "Well!" he said, "it is very evident it cannot be the last—so it must be as I say. It is injurious to our pride, my darling; for I allow that it is pleasant to possess either in your own person or your wife's a delicate and mysterious malady, of which it can be said that it baffles the doctors, without very much hurting the patient; but never mind. If you can bear this disrespectful verdict

that you have nothing the matter with you, I assure you it makes me quite happy."

Mrs. Beresford looked at the doctor with very keen, eager eyes—eyes which had grown bigger and keener of late, perhaps from the failing of the round, smooth outlines of the face. She noticed that, though Maxwell saw very well that she was looking at him, he did not reply to those looks, but rather turned to her husband and answered him, as if he had not noticed her.

"I don't mean to be disrespectful," he said; "there is a little disturbance of the system, that is sometimes as serious as you could desire, and takes away the comfort of life perhaps more completely than a regular disease; but I hope that is not likely to happen here."

"No; I don't think it," said the easy man. "We shall try Baden, which is the prettiest—unless you prefer some other place; in short, we shall go off without guide or compass, and do exactly what pleases ourselves. We have done so, it must be allowed, pretty often before—but to do it with the sanction of the faculty——"

"And the child—as usual—will go to Sunninghill?"

"Why should you say as usual, Mr. Maxwell?" said Mrs. Beresford, with a suspicion of offence. "Do you think I should take her with me? Do you suppose, perhaps, that I might not come back again—that I might never—see—"

"This is so unnecessary," said the doctor, remonstrating. "What must I say? I wish I was as certain of a thousand a year. You will come back quite well, I hope."

"When people are very ill don't you say much the same things to them? There was poor Susan Maitland, whom you banished to Italy to die. People talked of her coming back again. Oh, no! I am not thinking of myself, but of the subject in general. One needed only to look in her face to see that she would never come back."

"People have different ideas of their duty," said Maxwell. "Some think it best not to frighten a patient with thoughts of death. I don't know that one can lay down any rule, one is guided by circumstances. To some nervous people it is best not to say anything. Some are more frightened than others—just as some people are more susceptible to pain than others."

"Now I am going to ask you another question," said Mrs. Beresford. "Suppose you had a patient very ill—I mean hopelessly ill, beyond all cure—do you think it is right to keep them alive as you do now, struggling to the last, staving off every new attack that might carry them off in quiet, fighting on and on to the last moment, and even prolonging that, when it comes so far, with cordials and stimulants? Keeping their breath in their poor, suffering bodies till you get to the end of your resources—your dreadful cruel resources, that is what I call them. Do you think this is right? I had an aunt who died dreadfully—of cancer."

"Ah! An aunt? You did not tell me this," said the doctor, off his guard; then, recovering himself, with something that looked like alarm,

he said hurriedly, "What would you have us do—kill the poor creatures? neglect them? refuse what aid, what alleviations we can——"

"I'll tell you what I should like you to do if it were me," she said, eagerly. "When it was all over, when you were sure I could not get better, when there was nothing more in life but to suffer—suffer; then I should like you to make a strong, sweet dose for me to put me out of my trouble. I should like James to give it me. Do you remember what was said that time in India, in the mutiny? I don't know if it was true, but people said it. That the husbands of some of the poor ladies kissed them and shot them, to save them; don't you remember? That is what I should like you to do—a sweet, strong dose; and James would bring it to me and kiss me, and put it to my lips. That would be true love!" she said, growing excited, the pale roses in her cheeks becoming hectic red; "that would be true friendship, Mr. Maxwell! Then I should not be afraid. I should feel that you two stood between me and anguish, between me and agony——"

Both the men rose to their feet as if to restrain her vehemence, with one impulse. "My darling, my darling!" said James Beresford, in dismay, "what are you thinking of?" As for Mr. Maxwell, he walked to the window and looked out, his features working painfully. There was a moment in which the husband and wife clung together, he consoling her with every assuring word he could think of, she clinging to him with long hysterical sobs. "My love, what has put this into your head?" he said, half sobbing too, yet pretending to laugh. "My Annie, what fancy is this? Have you lost your wits, my darling? Why this is all folly; it is a dream; it is a craze you have taken into your head. Here is Maxwell will tell you——"

Here Maxwell made him a sign over his wife's head so impassioned and imperative that the man was struck dumb for the moment. He gazed blankly at the doctor, then stooped down to murmur fond words less distinct and articulate in her ear. Fortunately, she was too much excited, too much disturbed, to notice this sudden pause, or that the doctor said nothing in response to her husband's appeal. She held fast by his arm and sobbed, but gradually grew calmer, soothed by his tenderness, and after a while made a half-smiling, tearful apology for her weakness. It was after dinner on a lovely summer evening, not more than twilight, though it was late. The two gentlemen had been lingering over their claret, while she lay on the sofa waiting for them, for she did not choose to be shut up upstairs all by herself, she said. After she had recovered they went to the drawing-room, where the windows were all open, and a couple of softly-burning lamps lit up the twilight with two half-veiled moons of light. There was not a lovely prospect as at Sunninghill, nothing, indeed, but the London square, where a few trees vegetated, just room enough for the dew to fall, and for "the little span of sky and little lot of stars" to unfold themselves. But even London air grows soft with that musical effect of summer, and the sounds of passing



voices and footsteps broke in with a faint, far-off sound as in dreams. The country itself could not have been more peaceful. Mrs. Beresford, half ashamed of herself, sat down at the little bright tea-table just within the circle of one of the lamps, and made tea, talking with a little attempt at gaiety, in which, indeed, the natural revulsion of relief after that outbreak of alarm and melancholy was evident. It was she now who was the soul of the little party, for the doctor was moody and preoccupied, and her husband watched her with an anxiety almost too great to be kept within the bounds of ordinary attention. She rose, however, to the occasion. She began to talk of their probable travels, of Baden and Homburg, and all the other places which had been suggested to her. "We shall be as well known about the world as the Wandering Jew," she said; "better, for he had not a wife; and now that we have nearly exhausted Europe, there will be nothing for us but the East, or Egypt—suppose we go to Egypt, that would be original?"

"Not at all original," said Mr. Maxwell, who seemed half to resent her new-born gaiety. "All the cockneys in the world go to Egypt. Mr. Cook does the Pyramids regularly; and as for Jerusalem, it is common, common as Margate, and the society not much unlike."

"Margate is very bracing, I have always heard," said Mrs. Beresford, "and much cheaper than a German bath. What do you say to saving money, James, and eating shrimps and riding donkeys? I remember being at Margate when I was a child. They say there is not such air anywhere; and Mr. Maxwell says that the sea, if I like the sea——"

"As for bracing air, my love, I think there is nothing like St. Moritz. Do you remember how it set me up after that—that——"

"Give him a big, well-sounding name, doctor," said Mrs. Beresford, laughing; "it was only a bilious attack. But, talking of the sea, there is Biarritz—that would do, don't you think? It is warm, and it *was* gay. After all, however, I don't think I care for the sea. The Italian lakes are fine in the autumn, and as it gets cooler we might get on perhaps to Florence, or even Rome—or Kamtschatka, or Timbuctoo, or the Great Sahara," she said, with a burst of laughter. "You are complaisance itself, you gentlemen. Now I'll go and sing you something to reward you for humouring me to the top of my bent, and licensing me to go where I please."

She had a pretty voice, and sang well. The piano was at the other end of the room, the "back drawing-room" of the commonplace London house. The two men kept their places while she went away into the dim evening, and sat down there scarcely visible, and sang. The soft, sweet voice, not powerful, but penetrating, rose like a bird in the soft gloom. James Beresford looked at the doctor with an entreating look of secret anguish as the first notes rose into the air, so liquid, so tender, so sweet.

"Are you afraid? tell me!" he said, with pathetic brevity.

Maxwell could not bear this questioning. He started up, and went to look this time at a picture on the wall. "I don't know that I have

any occasion to be afraid," he said, standing with his back turned to his questioner, and quite invisible from the piano. "I'm—a nervous man for a doctor when I'm interested in a case——"

Here there was a pause, for she had ended the first verse of the song, and the low warble of the symphony was not enough to cover their voices.

"Don't speak of her as a case," said Beresford, low but eager, as the singing recommenced; "you chill my very blood."

"I didn't mean to," said the doctor, with colloquial homeliness; and he went away into the back drawing-room and sat down near the piano, to escape being questioned, poor Beresford thought, who sat still mournfully in the narrow circle of the lamplight, asking himself whether there was really anything to fear. The soft security of the house with all its open windows, the friendly voices heard outside, the subdued pleasant light, the sweet voice singing in the dimness, what a picture of safety and tranquillity it made! What should happen to disturb it? Why should it not go on for ever? James Beresford's sober head grew giddy as he asked himself this question, a sudden new ache undreamed of before leaping up, in spite of him, into his heart. The doctor pretended to be absorbed in the song; he beat time with his fingers as the measure went on. Never in the memory of man had he shown so much interest in singing before. Was it to conceal something else, something which could not be put into words, against the peace of this happy house, which had come into his heart?

Fortunately, however, Beresford thought, his wife forgot all about that agitating scene for some days. She did not speak of it again, and for about a week after was unusually lively and gay, stronger and better than she had been for some time, and more light in heart, talking of their journey, and making preparations for it with all the pleasant little sentiment which their "honeymooning" expeditions had always roused in her. When everything was ready, however, the evening before they left home a change again came over her. Cara had been sent to Sunninghill with her nurse that day, and the child had been unwilling to go, and had clung to her mother with unusual pertinacity. Even when this is inconvenient it is always flattering; and perhaps Mrs. Beresford was pleased with the slight annoyance and embarrassment which it caused.

"Remember, James," she said, with some vivacity, as they sat together that evening, "this is to be the last time we go honeymooning. Next time we are to be respectable old married people (as we are, with our almost grown-up daughter). She is nearly as tall as I am, the child! nearly eleven—and so very tall for her age."

"I think we might take her," said Beresford, who indeed had often wished for her before. "She is old enough to bear the travelling, and otherwise it would do her good."

"Yes, this must be the last time," she said, her voice suddenly dropping into a sigh, and her mood changing as rapidly. A house is dreary on the eve of departure. Boxes in the hall, pinafores on the furniture,

the pretty china, the most valuable nicknacks all carried away and locked up—even the habitual books disturbed from their places, the last *Pall Mall* on the table. The cloud came over her face as shadows flit over the hills, coming down even while she was speaking. "The last time," she said. "I can't help shivering. Has it grown cold? or is it that some one is walking over my grave, as people say?"

"Why, Annie, I never knew you were superstitious."

"No. It is a new thing for me; but that is scarcely superstition. And why should I care who walked over my grave? I must die some time or other and be buried, unless they have taken to burning before then. But there is one thing I feel a great deal about," she added, suddenly. "I said it once before, and you were frightened, James. If you knew that I was going to die of a painful disease—*must* die—that nothing could happen to save me, that there was nothing before me but hopeless pain—James, dear, listen to me!—don't you think you would have the courage for my sake to make an end of me, to put me out of my trouble?"

"Annie, for heaven's sake don't talk so. It is nonsense, but it makes me unhappy."

"As a matter of speculation," she said, with a knowledge of his weakness, "you can't think it would be wrong to do this—do you, James?"

"As a matter of speculation," he said, and the natural man awoke in him. He forgot the pain the idea had caused him, and thought of it only as an idea; to put it in other words, the woman beguiled him, and he got upon one of his hobbies. "There are many things one allows as speculation which one is not fond of in fact. People must have a certain power over their own lives, and I think with you, my love, that it is no charity to keep infirm and suffering people just alive, and compel them to drag their existence on from day to day. Notwithstanding heaven's canon 'gainst self-slaughter, I think people should be allowed a certain choice. I am not altogether against euthanasia; and if indeed recovery is hopeless and life only pain——"

"Yes, James," she said, eagerly, her eyes lighting up, her cheeks flaming with the red of excitement; "I am glad you see it like that; one might go further perhaps—when from any reason life was a burden; when one was useless, hopeless, unhappy——"

"Stop a little; we are going too fast," he said, with a smile, so entirely did the argument beguile him. "No one is justified in treating unhappiness like a mortal disease; unhappiness may pass away—does pass away we all know, even when it seems worst. I cannot allow that; neither would I let people judge which lives were useless, their own or other people's; but illness which was beyond the possibility of cure ought to be different; therefore, if the patient wished it, his wish, I think, should be law—Annie, my darling! what is this? what do you mean?"

She had suddenly risen from where she was sitting near him, and thrown herself half at his feet, half into his arms.

"Only this," she said; "promise me—promise me, James! if this

should ever happen to me—if you had the assurance, not only from me, but from—the people who know—that I had a terrible complaint, that I could never get better; promise that you would put me out of pain, James. Promise that you would give me something to deliver me. You would not stand by and see me going down, down into the valley of death, into misery and weariness and constant pain, and, O God! loathsomeness, James!”

She buried her head in his breast, clinging to him with a grasp which was almost fierce; her very fingers which held him, appealing strenuously, forcing a consent from him. What could he say? He was too much distressed and horrified to know how to shape his answer. Fond words, caresses, soothing of every kind were all in vain for use at such a moment. “Far be it from you, my darling; far be it from you,” he cried. “You! oh, how can you let your imagination cheat you so, my love! Nothing like this is going to happen, my Annie, my best, my dearest—”

“Ah!” she cried, “but if it were not imagination!—promise me, James.”

Whether she did eventually wring this wild promise from him he never knew. He would have said anything to calm her, and finally he succeeded; and having once more cleared her bosom of this perilous stuff, she regained her gaiety, her courage and spirits, and they set off as cheerful as any pair of honeymoon travellers need wish to be. But after she had left him and gone to her room pacified and comforted that night, you may fancy what sort of a half-hour that poor man had as he closed the windows, which had still been left open, and put out the lamps as was his practice, for they were considerate people and did not keep their servants out of bed. He stepped out on the balcony and looked up at the moon, which was shedding her stream of silver light as impartially upon the London housetops as if those white roofs had been forest trees. How still it seemed, every one asleep or going to rest, for it was late—a few lights glimmering in high windows, a sensation of soft repose in the very air! God help this silent sleeping earth upon which even in her sleep dark evils were creeping! Was some one perhaps dying somewhere even at that serene moment, in the sweet and tranquil stillness? His heart contracted with a great pang. In the midst of life we are in death. Why had those haunting, terrible words come into his ears?

### CHAPTER III.

#### HONEYMOONING.

THE real honeymoon is not always a delightful moment. This, which sounds like heresy to the romantic, and blasphemy to the young, is a fact which a great many people acknowledge readily enough when they have gone beyond the stage at which it sounds like an offence to the wife or to the husband who is supposed to have made that period rapturous. The new pair have not the easy acquaintance with each other which

makes the happiness of close companionship ; perhaps they have not that sympathy with each other's tastes which is almost a better practical tie than simple love. They are half afraid of each other, they are making discoveries every day of new points in each other's characters, delightful or undelightful as may be, which bewilder their first confidence of union ; and the more mind and feeling there is between them, the more likely is this to be the case. The shallow and superficial "get on" better than those who have a great deal of excellence or tender depth of sentiment to be found out. But after the pair have come to full acquaintance ; after they have learned each other from A B C up to the most difficult chapter ; after the intercourse of ordinary life has borne its fruit ; there is nothing in the world so delightful as the honeymooning which has passed by years the legitimate period of the honeymoon. Sometimes one sees respectable fathers and mothers enjoying it, who have sent off their children to the orthodox honeymoon, and only then feel with a surprised pleasure how sweet it is to have their own solitude *à deux*, to be left to themselves for a serene and happy moment ; to feel themselves dearer and nearer than they ever were before. There is something infinitely touching and tender in this honeymooning of the old. James Beresford and his wife, however, were not of these. They were still young, and of all the pleasures they had there was none equal to this close and unbroken companionship. They knew each other so well, and all their mutual tastes, that they scarcely required to put their intercourse into words ; and yet how they would talk ! about everything, about nothing, as if they had just met after a long absence, and had thoughts to exchange on every subject. This is a paradox, but we are not bound to explain paradoxes which are of the very essence of life, and the most attractive things in it. It had been the habit of these two to go everywhere together. Mrs. Beresford had not the prejudices of an English female Philistine. She went where her husband wanted to go, fearing nothing, and trotted about with him high and low, through picture-galleries and old churches, to studios, even behind the scenes of the operas, and through the smoke-clouds of big ateliers. Nothing came amiss to her with him by her side. It is almost the only way in which a woman can enjoy the freedom of movement, the easy locomotion of a man. Mrs. Beresford went away quite cheerfully, as we have said. She forgot or put away her mysterious terrors. She addressed herself to all the ordinary enjoyments which she knew so well. "We shall never be so free again," she said, half laughing, half with a remote infinitesimal pang. "We shall have to go to the correct places and do the right things when Cara is with us." "We must give up bric-a-brac," she said afterwards. "Cara must not grow up acquainted with all those dusty back premises ; her pretty frocks would be spoiled, and her infantine sincerity. If she had heard you bargaining, James, for that Buen Retiro cup ! Saying it is naught, it is naught, and then bragging of the treasure you had found as soon as it was out of the dealer's hands,"

"Well," he said, with a shrug of his shoulders, "I only do as other people do. Principles of honour don't consist with collecting. I am no worse than my neighbours."

"But that will never do for Cara," said the mother; "if you and I are not all her fancy painted us, we will not do for Cara. No, I thought you had never remarked her really. She is the most unpromising little idealist! and if we disappoint her, James, I don't know what the child will do."

"It appears to me that you are making a bugbear of Cara."

"No; but I know her. We must give up the bric-a-brac; for if you continue with it under her blue eyes you will be ruined. If she was here she would make you go back and tell the man he has sold you that cup too cheap."

"That would be nonsense," said Mr. Beresford, involuntarily putting his hand into the pocket where he kept his money. "Folly! You don't suppose he gave half as much for it as he sold it to us for. The very mention of that sort of sickening conscientiousness puts one out. We are to sell in the dearest and buy in the cheapest market, eh? That's the true principle of trade."

"It is not in the Bible, though," said Mrs. Beresford, with a smile. "Cara would open her eyes and wonder; and you, who are the weakest of men, could never stand against her if Cara made big eyes."

"The weakest of men! You flatter me, it must be allowed——"

"Yes; so you are, James. You could not endure to be disapproved of. What would have become of you if I, instead of giving in to all your ways, had been a more correct and proper person? If I had made you visit just the right things—go to English parties, and keep to the proper sort of tourist society? If you had been obliged to sit indoors in the evenings and read a Galignani or a Tauchnitz novel while I worked, what would have become of you? I know well enough, for my part."

"I should have done it, I suppose," he said, half laughing; "and will Cara—little Cara—be like that? You frighten me, Annie; we had better make away with her somehow; marry her, or hand her over to the aunts, before it comes to this."

Then a sudden change came over the smiling face. "Cara—or some one else—will most likely be like that. Poor James! I foresee trouble for you. How you will think of me when you are in bonds! when you want to go out and roam about on the Boulevards, and have to sit still instead and read aloud to somebody! Ah! how you will think of me! You will say, Poor Annie! if Annie had but lived——"

"What is this? what is this?" he said. "Again, Annie! I think you want to make me miserable; to take all the comfort out of my life."

"Oh no, no; not that," she said. "I am only going to get my bonnet, and then we shall go out. Cara is not here yet to keep us in order. We can honeymoon yet for one more year."

Was this only the caprice of her nature (she had always been capri-



cious) going a little further than usual? Her husband liked her all the better for her quick changes of sentiment; the laughing and crying that were like an April sky. He said to himself that she had always been like that; always changing in a moment, quarrelling sometimes even, making him uncomfortable for mere variety. Monotony was the thing she hated; and now she had taken this fad, this fancy, and thought herself ill. How could she be ill when she still could run about with him and enjoy herself as much as ever? How keen she had been in the bric-a-brac shop of which she had chosen to talk! He never should have found out that Buen Retiro cup but for her. It was her sharp eyes that saw it. It was she who had rummaged through the dust and all the commonplace gatherings to those things which had really interest. Ill! though all the College of Physicians swore it, and she to the boot, he would not believe that she was ill. Disturbance of the system, that was all the worst of them ever said; but how little meaning there was in that! Out of sorts: reduced to plain English, that was what disturbance of the system meant; and everybody was subject to that. She came in while he was in the full course of these thoughts with a brilliant little flush on her cheeks, her eyes shining, her whole aspect full of animation. "I am ready, sir," she said, making him a mocking curtsy. Yes; capriciosa, that was what she had always been, and he loved her for it. It explained her changes, her fancies, her strange notions better than anything else could do.

That was the first day, however, on which her strength really showed symptoms of breaking down. She got tired, which was a thing she never owned to; lost the pretty flush on her cheek, became pale, and worn out. "I don't know what is the matter with me," she said; "all at once I feel so tired."

"And with very good reason," said he. "Think how rapidly we have been travelling; think what we have been doing since. Why, you were on foot the whole morning. You are tired; so am I, for that matter. I was thinking of saying so, but you are always so hard upon my little fatigues. What a comfort for me to find that you, too, for once in a way, can give in!" Thus he tried to take her favourite part and laugh her out of her terrors. She consented with a smile more serious than her gravity had been of old, and they went back to their room and dined "quietly"; and he sat and read to her, according to the picture of English domesticity which she had drawn out with smiles a few hours before. It was so soon after that tirade of hers that they could not but remember it both of them. As it happened, there was nothing but a Tauchnitz novel to read (and who that has been ill or sad, or who has had illness or sadness to solace in a foreign place, but has blessed the novels of Tauchnitz?), and he read it, scarcely knowing what the words were which fluttered before his eyes. And as for her, she did not take much notice of the story either, but lay on the sofa, and listened, partly to his voice, partly to the distant sound of the band playing, with strange

heaviness and aching in her heart. It was not that she wished to be out listening to the band, moving about in the warm air, hearing the babble of society—that was not what she cared for; but to be lying there out of the current; to have dropped aside out of the stream; to be unable for the common strain of life! So he read, sadly thinking, not knowing what he read; and she half listened, not knowing what she was listening to. It was the first time, and the first time is the worst, though the best. “It is only once in a way,” he said to her, when the long evening was over; “to-morrow you will be as well as ever.” And so she was. It was the most natural thing in the world that both or either of them should be tired, once in a way.

The Beresfords stayed for a long time on the Continent that year. They went about to a great many places. They stayed at Baden till they were tired of the place. They went to Dresden, because Mrs. Beresford took a fancy to see the great San Sisto picture again. Then they went on to lovely old-world Prague, and to lively Vienna, and through the Tyrol to Milan, and then back again to the Italian lakes. Wherever they went they found people whom it was pleasant to know, whom they had met before on their many journeys, people of all countries and every tongue—noble people, beautiful people, clever people—the sort of society which can only be had by taking a great deal of trouble about it, and which, even with the greatest amount of trouble, many people miss entirely. This society included ambassadors and hill-farmers, poor curés, bishops, great statesmen, and professors who were passing rich on five shillings a day. Nothing was too great or too small for them, and as wherever they went they had been before, so wherever they went they found friends. Sometimes it was only a chambermaid; but, nevertheless, there she was with a pleasant human smile. And, to tell the truth, James Beresford began to be very glad of the friendly chambermaids, and to calculate more where they were to be found than upon any other kind of society; for his wife had followed her usual practice of coming without a maid, and as her strength flagged often, he was thankful, too thankful, to have some one who would be tender of her, and care for her as he himself was not always permitted to do, and as nobody else but a woman could. Oh, how he longed to get home, while he wandered about from one beautiful spot to another, hating the fine scenery, loathing and sickening at everything he had loved! Commonplace London and the Square with its comforts would have pleased him a hundred times better than lovely Como or the wild glory of the mountains; but she would not hear of going home. One day, when the solemn English of a favourite Kammer Mädchen had roused him to the intolerable nature of the situation, he had tried, indeed, with all his might to move her to return. “Your goot laty,” Gretchen had said, “is nod—well. I ton’t undershtand your goot laty. She would be bedder, mooch bedder at ‘ome, in Lonten.” “I think you are right, Gretchen,” he had said, and very humbly went in to try what he could do. “My love,” he said, “I am beginning to get tired

of the Tyrol. I should like to get home. The Societies are beginning. I see Huxley's lectures start next week. I like to be there, you know, when all my friends are there. Shouldn't you be pleased to get home?"

"No," she said. She had been lying on the sofa, but got up as soon as he came in. "You know I hate autumn in London; the fogs kill me. I can't—I can't go back to the fogs. Go yourself, James, if you please, and attend all your dear societies, and hear Mr. Huxley. Take me to Como first, and get me rooms that look on the lake, and hire Abbondio's boat for me; and then you can go."

"It is likely that I should go," he said, "without you, my darling! When did I ever leave you? But there are so many comforts at home you can't have here; and advice—I want advice. You don't get better so fast as I hoped."

She looked at him with a strange smile. "No; I don't get better, do I?" she said. "Those doctors tell such lies; but I don't get worse, James; you must allow I don't get worse. I am not so strong as I thought I was; I can't go running about everywhere as I used to do. I am getting old, you know. After thirty I believe there is always a difference."

"What nonsense, Annie! there is no difference in you. You don't get back your strength——"

"That's it; that's all. If you were to leave me quite alone and quiet, to recruit now? yes, I think I should like to know that you were in London enjoying yourself. Why shouldn't you enjoy yourself? Women get worn out sooner than men; and I don't want to cripple you, James. No; take me to Como—I have taken a fancy to Como—and then you can come back for me whenever you please."

"I am not going to leave you," he said, with a sigh. "You must not be unreasonable, my darling. What pleasure would it be to me to go home without you? It was you I was thinking of; for me it is all right. I am quite happy here. As for Huxley and the rest, you don't think I care for them. It was you I was thinking of."

"You said the Societies. Whatever you do, James, speak the truth. I suppose," she added, with a laugh which sounded harsh, "you are afraid I shall get very ill—die perhaps, away from home?"

Poor man! what was he to say? "O, Annie!" he cried, "how you stab me! If I thought anything of the kind, you know I'd have Sir William here to-morrow, or anyone, if it should cost me all I have. I know very well there is no danger," he went on, taking a certain forlorn comfort out of his own bold words; "but you don't get up your strength as you ought, and knocking about in these bare rooms can't be good for you; and, living as we are—and you have no maid——"

"I hate a maid. I like Gretchen a great deal better. She makes so much of me."

"Then take Gretchen with you, my dearest; take her to Como; keep her with you till you get home."

"Oh, how like a man that is!" she said, laughing. "Take Gretchen with me—Gretchen, who is her father's only daughter, the life and soul of the place! What would he do without Gretchen? He would have to shut up altogether. I might drop out of the world, and I would not be missed half so much as she would. Do you know I begin to get tired of this place, and the hills, James," she cried, starting up. "Let us go and ask about Donato and his horses. I want to get to Como before October. Why, we'll come in for the vintage! I like the vintage; and there are advertisements everywhere about a sale at one of the villas. We shall be sure to pick up something. Is it too late to start to-day?"

"My darling, when you take a thing in your head——"

"Yes, to be sure, I like to do it all at once. I was always hot-headed. Now mind, we are to start to-morrow. I always loved Como, James; you know I always did. We went there the first year we were married. I don't call it honeymooning when we don't go to Como; and remember this is our last bout of honeymooning; we shall have Cara next year."

She laughed, and was very gay all the evening, delighted with the idea of the change. But when he put her into Donato's big old-fashioned *vettura* next morning, and saw everything fastened on, and prepared for the long, slow journey, poor Beresford was very sad. He thought, if he could only have a long talk with Maxwell, and hear what Sir William had got to say, and know what it was that he had to fear, he should be less unhappy. There must be something, or she would not be so strange; but what was it? Almost anything was better, he thought, than fighting in the dark—fighting with ghosts, not knowing what you were afraid of. She was quite light-hearted at first, interested with the drive, and waved her hands to the hills as they went slowly out of sight. "Good-bye," she said, "you dear old giants! I hope those white furs of yours will keep you warm till we bring Cara. What will Cara think of the mountains? She never saw anything better than Sunninghill."

"Sunninghill has the effect of being much higher than it is with that great level stretch of flat country. It impresses the imagination just as much as your giants. Don't laugh, Annie; but your mountains stifle me. I never have air enough to breathe. I like miles and miles of country round me. You know my weakness."

"Sunninghill before the Alps!" she cried, laughing. "'Tis clear you are a true cockney. Give me your shoulder for a pillow, I think I shall go to sleep."

And so she did; and the horses jogged on and on, now slow, now fast, their bells jingling, and Donato's whip making harmless circles and slashes over their heads; and houses and hedgerows, and slopes of mountain, flew past in a dream. James Beresford could see nothing but the wan lines of the face that rested on his shoulder, solemn in that deep sleep of weariness. How worn she was; how pale; growing whiter, he thought, and whiter, till sometimes in terror he stooped down close to make sure that the pale lips were parted by living breath,

## A Greek Hymn.

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"I PRAISE Demeter the beautiful-haired and her slender-ankled daughter"—so begins a poem which is one of the most beautiful of all antiquity. But before we listen to the voice of the Greek singer himself, let us pause a little, and consider the subject of his song.

Who Demeter and her daughter are, we know. Demeter is the Greek goddess we commonly call by her Roman name Ceres, and her daughter is Persephone, or, as we again say after the Romans, Proserpine. There is nothing unfamiliar in these names, nor in the story which they call to mind. How the maiden was gathering flowers among her play-mates when Pluto sprang upon her and took her to be his bride among the dead—how the mother rushed in chase, and in her despair cursed the fruits of the earth so that they grew not—how a covenant was made at last, whereby she won back her child for a part of every year, and took the curse away—all this makes up one of the most moving and best remembered tales of the ancient poets. Even if we were inclined to forget it, our own poets would not suffer us. They are never tired of alluding to it, and have brought it in, again and again, to heighten with a crowning touch their own happiest effects. Thus Shakspeare gives the last charm to that passage of the *Winter's Tale*, where it seems as though all the sweetness and all the purity of girls and flowers together had passed, by some magical distilment, into his verse, when he makes Perdita think what are the flowers suitable for maids, and then remember Proserpine, and say :—

Ah ! Proserpina,  
For the flowers now which, frightened, thou lett'st fall  
From Dis's waggon ; \* daffodils  
That come before the swallow dares, and take  
The winds of March with beauty ; violets, dim,  
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,  
Or Cytherea's breath ; pale primroses,  
That die unmarried, ere they can behold  
Bright Phoebus in his strength, a malady  
Most incident to maids ; bold oxlips, and  
The crown imperial ; lilies of all kinds,  
The flower-de-luce being one.

But why repeat that melodious catalogue, which everybody knows by heart ? In like manner Milton, in a passage not, like this, of nature and

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\* Thus Ovid, *Metam.* v. 399 :

"Collecti flores tunicis cecidere remissis."

inspired fancy, but of great rhetorical opulence, when he has exhausted his own inventions for enriching the landscape of Eden, effects his climax by reciting what other landscapes, the fairest seen or sung of, were nevertheless not so fair as this, and first—

not that fair vale  
Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers,  
Herself a fairer flower, of gloomy Dis  
Was gathered, which gave Ceres all that pain  
To seek her thro' the world.

Generally, we may say, the thought of these goddesses is not only dear to poets, but inspiring, and has the power of raising them to their best. Without stopping at Schiller's famous *Lament of Ceres*, or looking beyond our own time and country, we can remember how Mr. Matthew Arnold is at his best when, in the elegy on Clough, he thinks of Moschus and his elegy on Bion, and recalls the wish of Moschus that he might follow the dead Bion down to Tartarus, and catch the notes of the songs he sings in Pluto's halls to Proserpine:—

O easy access to the hearer's grace  
When Dorian shepherds sang to Proserpine!  
For she herself had trod Sicilian fields,  
She knew the Dorian water's gush divine,  
She knew each lily white which Enna yields,  
Each rose with blushing face;  
She loved the Dorian pipe, the Dorian strain;\*  
But ah, of our poor Thames she never heard!  
Her foot the Cumner cowslips never stirred!  
And we should tease her with our plaint in vain.

Or again, there is Mr. Swinburne, who surpasses himself in that *Hymn to Proserpine* where he puts into the mouth of a Greek of the Theodosian age a last protest against the new creed that is casting out the old, and a last supplication to the goddess to take him from these troubles to her rest.

In some degree or another, then, we have all felt the charm of this myth. As to the meaning and origin of the myth, and the ideas which are embodied in the figures of Ceres and Proserpine, though scholars will have these matters present to their minds, to all of us they may not be so clearly present. The reader who wishes to inquire into them, will find a study of several parts of the subject written by Mr. Pater, with his accustomed charm of thought and style, in two recent numbers of the *Fortnightly Review*. In a course of lectures at Cambridge last autumn I attempted, myself, a history, such as the labours of many Germans have made possible, of these goddesses and their cycle as they come before us in ancient literature and art. For that history the following translation was originally written. In order to understand of what

\* Moschus, iii. 129:

κάκιστη Σίκελις καὶ ἐν Ἀθηναίοισιν ἔπαιζεν  
ἀγνεσί, καὶ μέλος οἶδε τὸ Δωρίον.



ideas, though but half-realised, the figures of our story are the symbols, and what meanings, half-consciously to the narrator, give weight and solemnity to his narrative, let the reader bear in mind thus much only. Ceres, or as we shall call her, Demeter, is an Earth-mother as the word implies. Other and older Earth-mothers were known to Greek cosmology. The oldest of them all was Gaia, the first-born daughter of Chaos, and mother of the Titans. In the generation of the Titans themselves, the earth was represented by Rhea, otherwise called Kybele; but the powers of the earth personified in Rhea, and propitiated in her Phrygian and Kretan rites, were its savage and awful powers. Whereas in the daughter of Rhea, Demeter, another set of powers was personified. She belongs to the generation of the Olympians, the younger gods who rule over civilised mankind; she, also, is a goddess of the earth, but of the earth in arable places, and not of wilderness or mountain; a goddess of the earth's bounty, and not of her solitudes; a goddess of corn and corn-lands, of ploughing, sowing, reaping, and the harvest-home. As such, she was worshipped in many a spring and summer festival, variously called Threshing-feasts, feasts of Abundance, and the like. In the minds of the whole Greek race, it was she who had first turned them from savage ways, had given them golden grain instead of acorns, and taught them the use of the plough. And as agriculture is the first step in civilization, so settled family life is the next. The goddess of husbandry becomes by a kindred title the goddess of home; and Demeter, who has taught the man to plough and sow, teaches the man and woman to dwell together under the same roof, beside the same hearth. In this capacity, Demeter is the goddess of marriage laws, and thence of all laws, Demeter Thesmophoros; and as such, from one end of the Greek world to the other, the women held a feast of their own in her honour, the October feast of the Thesmophoria. But her most solemn titles are yet to come. The earth, besides the bounty of its fields, has the mystery of its depths; it includes an invisible as well as a visible world, an under region of death as well as an upper region of life. Hades, or Pluto, was the god whom the ancients thought of as permanently ruling over this invisible world. But there is a kingdom common to both worlds. There are the fruits of the earth, which come up in the spring time, and bloom for a season, and go down in the autumn and are seen no more till the next spring. The things of this kingdom, this bloom and verdure, were naturally thought of as the offspring of the Earth-mother; they were invested with divinity, and the divinity was called the child of Demeter. This child of Demeter is named Persephone; and the story of Persephone carried away by Hades and restored after a season is the story of the green life of the earth, its disappearance and renewal. But why, inquired the Greek imagination, if the green herb disappears and is renewed, may not the life of man, when it has disappeared, be renewed also? We, too, go down into the earth; shall we, too, hope to return again? Out of this play of the imagination arose a kind of faith, shadowy and indeterminate

in its intellectual outlines, but none the less powerful in its hold upon the emotions. Demeter and Persephone were the goddesses and guardians of that faith. As deities of death, and an after life in which they would reserve for their faithful privileges unknown to others, these two were sovereign; they were the Queen Goddesses, the Most Holy, the mystic inseparable Two. Their yearly festival at the Attic town of Eleusis was the most august and the most frequented of all the religious solemnities of Greece; and from that parent festival other local Eleusinia were propagated far and wide.

I was walking a few weeks ago on the ground where the great temple of Demeter and Persephone at Eleusis used to stand. "Upon the jutting hill"—"beneath the town, above the fountain,"—these are our poet's phrases in speaking of the site. The jutting hill is there, a long spur of rock closing the northern extremity of a beautiful sweeping bay which looks like a lake, its waters are so shut in by the opposite island of Salamis. Except where this spur juts out, the shore is formed by a width of level soil lying between the bay and the mountains of Cithæron; and on that soil, the old Thriasian plain, the ancients believed that mankind had first been taught to sow and reap. Close to the remains of the ancient landing pier of the town, I found gangs of men trenching foundations and blasting stone for building; and on inquiry, learnt that a French capitalist was in the act of constructing new steam-mills, to grind for export the grain of the adjacent coast. Here, after our modern fashion, was a confirmation of the ancient glory of Eleusis more distinct than was to be found in any visible vestiges of the past. For the area of the great and holy temple can only just be traced out by a careful search. It is covered with the squalid houses of the modern village, which has clustered about the extremity of the spur, lower than where the ancient town was built. That was a "hill-set city," and the sacred buildings stood at its foot, between it and the plain. Just at the rise from the plain, you find the only considerable ruins that remain—those of the Propylæa, a stately portico built before the entrance to the temple, probably in Roman times, and on the model of the Propylæa of the Parthenon at Athens. The area of this portico has been cleared; the lowest drums of its columns are in their place; the floor is strewn with many huge and glittering fragments, and among the fallen capitals you may watch the Eleusinian women of to-day, a lithe-limbed race in striped Albanian costumes, dance their dances on seasons of Christian holiday.

The so-called Homeric hymn to Demeter, which we are about to read, is written in honour of the goddess under the last and highest of her attributes. The poet celebrates the mother and daughter, not as presiding over the sanctities of the hearth, and only incidentally as patronising the labours of the farm; but expressly as controlling the destinies of mortals after death. His point is to tell how the temple of their mystic worship was founded at their own command, and its ritual taken from their own lips. He tells of that foundation, and the events which led up to it.

in the simple and flowing manner of the old epics. It is not at all probable that this was a hymn ever used in the actual worship of the goddesses. There is nothing liturgical about it; it is rather in the nature of a ballad, recited, it may be, by a patriotic minstrel of Eleusis to the groups of strangers who thronged to the city, or, in competition with other such ballads, at one of those poetical tournaments which formed part, we know, of many of the Greek religious festivals. I say a minstrel of Eleusis, because of his special tone of pride in the town and locality, and because he ignores Athens; while his Ionian dialect would be quite proper to an Attic rhapsodist. It is their ballad character, and the community they have of style and diction with the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, which have earned the title of Homeric for a certain number of Greek hymns, or narrative poems in praise of particular divinities, which have come down to us. This is the most beautiful of them all. It moves with much of the same easy grandeur as the *Odyssey*, it has the same romantic charm, and delights us with similar pictures of heroic manners, of chiefs trusted by their people, of beautiful unabashed virgins, of noble hospitality to strangers. Like the *Odyssey*, it tells us of gods going to and fro among mortals, unrecognised until they choose; of disguises, and feigning answers, and sudden revelations. But in the mourning mother, under her name Deo, it sets before us a passion more disconsolate and intense, and in the prayer for grace hereafter, thoughts more far-reaching and mysterious, than we ever find in the earlier epics. These spiritual marks, and others of language and grammatical form, indicate for it a date, impossible to fix with anything like precision, in the period between the decay of the epic and the rise of the tragic poetry in Greece. What seems to point, however, to an origin not later than the middle of the seventh century before Christ is this; that in the century which followed—a time of troubled conscience and great religious ferment in Greece—the primitive worship of Eleusis seems to have become sophisticated with foreign elements; new rites, purifications, mysteries were introduced by adepts both from Thrace and Krete; and of these the hymn takes no notice, but exhibits the religion in its simplest, healthiest phase. It is not, indeed, safe to build too much on what we find or do not find in a text so full as this is of corruptions, transpositions, omissions, and what not. Unluckily the sole manuscript is a deplorably bad one found in the last century at Moscow, and now at Leyden. Nevertheless, and with all its imperfections, what we have remains one of the most precious of all the products of the Greek genius. Our old writers got their knowledge of the myth from sources comparatively vitiated. Their authorities were Ovid, and the last of the Latin poets, Claudian, themselves imitators of Greek authorities of the decadence, of Kallimachos and Nikander. But in sending the reader to this hymn, we send him to the fountain-head.

In his essay before mentioned, Mr. Pater gives a good abstract of the hymn; but I have tried to do something different, and to place it entire, letting nothing that I could seize escape, in the possession of the

English reader. A poem, it may be objected, to be transferred from one literature into another, should be rendered in verse, not prose. But I hold with those who think the difficulties in the way of good poetical translation can hardly be overcome. If the translator is not really a poet, what he writes will not really be poetry, and is anything worse than the form of poetry without the substance? But if he is really a poet, then he is certain to have an individuality as such, a manner which is his own and which he cannot put away; and then his translation will be poetry, but may be a very different kind of poetry from the original. The familiar case in point is Pope's *Homer*. We have just witnessed another and very remarkable instance. Mr. Morris has translated the *Æneid*, approaching Virgil with much more scruple and scholarship than Pope used in approaching Homer, and rendering his text, with a surprising fidelity, almost line for line and word for word. The result is a monument of literary energy and versatility, but, as I think, is no more like the real Virgil than Pope's *Homer* is like the real Homer. Mr. Morris's primitive, unconstrained, inartificial style, and its charm, are the reverse of the intensely disciplined and elaborate style of Virgil, and its charm; and his primitiveness and unconstraint, Mr. Morris, being really a poet, is unable to alter or forego. The wonder is, that it should be possible for a translation to be so faithful to the matter, and so foreign to the manner, of its original as Mr. Morris's *Æneids*. No doubt, the ideal of perfect translation is when one poet translates another both in matter and manner. But how many instances of such perfection are there? One of these very Homeric hymns affords nearly such an instance—I mean the hymn to Hermes. Shelley's translation of that is a delightful English poem. There is a particular quality in the original, a tone of gaiety, which it has in common with one or two other of the hymns, and in contradistinction to ours of Demeter—and this tone of gaiety, almost of banter, Shelley has taken great pains to catch. But the form of verse which he has chosen, the *ottava rima* of Orlando Whistcraft and Beppo, while it lends itself naturally to play and banter, does not at all remind us of the Homeric hexameter. And even in a performance like his, one of the treasures of our literature, many niceties of the original meaning are lost, for retaining which the freedom of prose is indispensable. As a rule, I think, prose is the right vehicle even for poetical translation—a prose which, in rendering poetry, must in some degree suggest the rhythms of verse, and may allow itself some license in inversions, and in the use of words proper to the Bible or the poets. The difficulty of such a style, which must suggest poetry, but be prose, is enhanced, for the purpose of rendering Homeric Greek, by the superabundance of compound epithets in the original. Compound epithets are a blot upon an English prose style. Even English poetry can hardly be too chary in using them. Our language cannot coin them off-hand, like the Greek or German; with us, a compound epithet must needs carry an emphasis, you cannot take it for granted or pass on. It is

either, as with weak writers, an awkwardness, or else, like Spenser's *sea-shouldering whales*, or like Keats's *cool-rooted flowers fragrant-eyed*, it is a felicity, which fastens the attention and remains in the memory. How, then, is one to treat the compound epithets which abound in Homer, and with a whole volley of which the present poem opens? A Homeric writer cannot name a person or object without instinctively naming a whole group of its qualities at the same time; maidens must always be deep-girdled, Hermes must always be the strong slayer of Argos, Zeus is always the loud-thundering and far-seeing son of Kronos; his brother Aïdes or Aidoneus, the king of the dead, is always the many-named one, the receiver of many guests (by a characteristic euphemism, which I have been unable to preserve, as to the real character and comprehensiveness of his hospitality); kings are always trusty or close-counselled; maidens, most perplexing of all, are apt to have eyes, or countenances, like the calyx, or cup, of a flower not fully open. All these attributes come up as a matter of course in the mind of the poet, and are told in words that pass melodiously along the current of the verse. The only way is to turn the difficulty, to employ harsh coinages seldom, periphrases and relative clauses sometimes, and even in extreme cases, where the epithet will not come in without stopping the flow of the discourse, to leave it out. I have indicated the places where I have taken other liberties, as in smoothing over jolts or filling up gaps in the text. And I have allowed myself to interrupt the march of the story at points which seemed to call for comment. And now let the singer strike up—

“I begin the song of Demeter the beautiful-haired, the holy goddess, both herself and her slender-ankled daughter, whom Aïdoneus seized, by the granting of loud-thundering far-seeing Zeus, where he found her playing, away from Demeter of the golden blade and shining fruit, among the deep-bosomed daughters of Oceanus, and gathering flowers along the soft meadow—roses and crocus and beautiful violets and flags and hyacinth, and that narcissus which earth by the device of Zeus brought forth for a lure to the maid, that He to whose house all come might have his desire; a thing of marvellous blossom it was, and a glory to all beholders, both immortal gods and mortal men; for a hundred heads had sprung up from the root thereof, and with its perfumed fragrance all the broad heaven laughed above, and all the earth, and the briny surges of the sea.”

So far the verses roll, before the singer stops to take breath. Our language is shorter-winded, and has forced upon us breaks and pauses which are not in the text. The text, however, is perhaps not all genuine. The enchanted flower is described with an extravagance like that of a later age. The original description most likely ended with the words “a glory to all beholders.” Be that as it may, there are two things which the reader ought to have present to his mind concerning

this miraculous flower; first, that the narcissus is a plant *narcotic*, and therefore chosen not without meaning for Persephone to pluck at the moment when she has to pass from the world of life to the world of death; and second, that the same choice at this point of the story is, however, by no means universal. The narcissus is peculiar to the Attic version; in Sicily, which presently appropriated the story and transferred this scene to the valley of Enna, it was not narcissus, but violets, which the maiden was intent upon when she was surprised. Coming now to the surprise, our poet gets terse and rapid enough:—

“So the maiden in amaze stretched out both hands at once to take the beautiful plaything. Then the wide-fielded earth along the plain of Nysa yawned, and where it yawned there leapt up the Lord to whose house all come, the son of Kronos, by many names men call him, and seized her against her will, and bore her off wailing upon his golden chariot. Loud then shrilled she with her voice, calling upon the name of Kronides her sire, most righteous and most high. But not one either of immortals or of mortal men heard her voice . . . save only that the gentle-thoughted daughter of Persaios from her cave, the bright-veiled Hekate, and the lord Helios as well, the shining son of Hyperion, heard the voice of the maiden when she called upon the name of Kronides her sire. But as for him, he was sitting apart from the immortals within a temple, a place of supplications, receiving goodly sacrifices from mortal men. Thus at the promptings of Zeus the maiden was borne off in her own despite by her sire's brother, the son of Kronos whom men call by many names, whose beck all follow, to whose house all go down. And as long as the goddess beheld land and starry sky and the strong-flowing fish-fraught sea, and as long as she yet thought to see her mother and the companies of the ever-living gods once more, so long for all her misery hope yet soothed her mind . . .” But presently she saw there was no hope . . . “And the crests of the mountains and the deeps of the sea rang beneath her immortal voice. And the queen her mother heard the voice; and sharp distress took her by the heart, and with her dear hands she tore the veil about her ambrosial hair, and cast a sable hood over both her shoulders, and sped forth like a bird over wet and dry, searching; and not one either of gods or mortal men would tell her true tidings. For nine days thereafter Queen Deo ranged over the earth, bearing in her hands burning torches, and in her affliction never once tasted ambrosia nor the sweet draught of nectar, nor ever dashed her body with the bath. But when at last the tenth dawn of daylight came upon her, there met her Hekate having in her hands a light, and brought her tidings, and spoke to her and said:— ‘Queen Demeter, that ripenest fair seasons and bestowest shining gifts, who of heavenly gods or mortal men has stolen away Persephone, and afflicted thy dear heart? For her voice I heard, but who it was that took her I saw not with my eyes; without guile I tell thee all I know.’ Thus spake Hekate; and the daughter of beautiful-haired Rhea answered



her not a word, but rushed swiftly along beside her with her burning torches in her hands. And they came to Helios, the watcher of gods and men, and stood before his horses, and the divine goddess questioned him:—  
 ‘Helios, regard me now above all goddesses, if ever at least by word or deed I made glad thy heart and mind: the daughter that I bore, my sweet flower, excellent in beauty,—her voice I heard loud through the desolate air, as though violent hands were upon her, but with my eyes I saw her not. But do thou now, since thou lookest down with thy beams out of the divine air upon all the earth and over the sea, tell me faithfully if anywhere thou hast seen the god or man who took my child by violence in her own despite, when I was not by, and is gone with her.’  
 Thus she spoke, and the son of Hyperion answered her, and said:—  
 ‘Queen Demeter, daughter of the beautiful-haired Rhea, thou shalt know, for dearly indeed I regard and pity thee in thine affliction for thy slender-ankled child. Now none other of the immortal gods is guilty save only cloud-marshalling Zeus, who hath given her to Aides, even to his own brother, to be called his bounteous bride; that Lord it was who seized her, and bore her down with his immortal horses beneath the place of mists and darkness. But goddess, cease thy great lamentation, thou hast no cause for anger unappeasable; no shame wilt thou have of thy son-in-law among the immortals, even of Aidoneus, whose beck all follow, thine own brother and sprung from the same seed. For his due, when first the great three shares were drawn, he received the lordship of the dead; among them he dwells, over them it is his portion to be prince.’ When Helios had spoken he cried to his steeds, and at the cry they drew the fleet car swiftly, like long-winged birds.”

Now, in various versions of the story, this part of it is told variously. For instance, according to Ovid's version in the *Metamorphoses*, the first person to sympathise with the mother in her bereavement is not Hekate, but Cyane, a transformed river-nymph, who causes a girdle dropped by Proserpine to float up to the surface of her waters, that Ceres may see Pluto and his prize have passed that way; neither is it Helios, the sun, who reveals to her what he has witnessed, and whither they have taken her child, but Arethusa, the fountain-nymph, who relates that she herself, on her way beneath the earth from Elis, has just seen Proserpine enthroned below as the bride of Pluto.

When the mother learns the truth, our poet goes on, “Affliction still more terrible and bitter possessed her mind; then indeed she was indignant with Kronion king of the clouds, and withdrew herself from the assembly of the gods and from high Olympos, and went forth among the cities and fruitful husbandries of men for a long space, spoiling her beauty, so that none that looked upon her knew her, either of men or full-girdled women; until it came to pass that she came to the house of the wise Keleos, who was king in those days over Eleusis, the sweet-smelling place of sacrifices. So with vengeance in her heart, she sate her down beside the way, at the Virgins' well, whence they of the

town drew water for their use, in the shadow where an olive had grown overhead; and she wore the likeness of an ancient woman who has known the last of child-bearing and of garland-loving Aphrodite—even such as are nurses and matrons in the houses of justice-dealing kings. And there the daughters of Eleusis-born Keleos beheld her when they came for water, to carry the fresh-flowing water in pitchers of brass to the dear house of their father. Four maidens like goddesses were they, wearing the bloom of their maidenhood, Kallidikè and Kleisidikè and lovely Demo, and Kallithoè who was the eldest of them all. And they knew her not; for gods are hard to be discerned by mortals. And they stood near and spoke winged words to her: 'Who and whence art thou, old dame, of mortals born long ago? and wherefore hast thou gone aside without the town and comest not near the houses? There, among the shadowy chambers, are women both aged even as thyself and younger, who would care for thee both with word and deed.' Thus said they, and the queen Goddess answered saying, 'Joy be with ye, children dear, whosoever of womankind ye be; now I will tell ye my tale; meet it is to tell a true tale to questioners such as ye are. My name is Dos, that is what my lady mother called me. And I am come last from Krete, across the broad ridges of the sea, by no desire of mine, but pirate men carried me off by violence despite myself. And they sailed with their swift ship and made land at Thorikos. And all the women and the crew went on shore together, and got dinner ready beside the stern-cables of the ship; but as for me, my mind was not set on the delights of supper, and I made off secretly and started over the dark mainland, and fled away from those overbearing masters, in order that they might not sell me whom they did not buy, and be the richer for my price. Thus I came straying hither, and I know not at all what land this is nor what people are its children. But now, I pray, may all they that dwell in the mansions of Olympos grant ye wedded husbands, and to bear children even as parents are fain to bear them; and me in turn, maidens, I pray ye pity me with kind hearts, dear children, until I can come to the house of some man or woman, to serve them with willing service in such matters as are meet for a woman of my years. And I could hold a newborn child in my arms, and nurse it well, and I could keep the house, and make my master's bed in the alcove of the well-built chambers; and I could teach the women their work.' So said the goddess; and forthwith Kallidikè answered her, the untamed maiden, fairest of the daughters of Keleos:—'Old nurse, vex ourselves as we may, needs must we mortals take the gifts the gods bestow on us; for indeed they are much the stronger. And I will answer thy questions plainly, and name the men of this place who dwell in the strength of prerogative, and stand at the head of the people, and guard the high places of the city by their counsels and just judgments. Now the close-counselled Triptolemos, and Diokles, and Polyxenos, and the blameless Eumolpos and Dolichos, and our own sovereign father, have all of them

wives managing in their houses, and of these not one at first sight would slight thee for thy looks, nor turn thee from her doors; but they will welcome thee, for indeed thou lookest like a god. Wait here, if thou wilt, that we may go to our father's house and tell all this from first to last to our mother, the deep-girdled Metaneira, in case she should bid thee come home to us and not go on to inquire at others' houses. She has a little son bringing up in her well-built chamber, her only son, late born, long prayed for, received with gladness. If thou wert to nurse him up, and he were to reach the blooming time of youth, then any woman might well envy thee when she looked on thee; such rewards would our mother give thee for thy nursing.' Thus said the maid; and the goddess nodded her head, and those sisters filled their polished pitchers with water, and carried them away with glee."

While the maidens, whose beautiful presence, and sweet breeding and behaviour, give the poem at this point such a charm, are away on their errand, let us pause for a moment, and notice the names they have mentioned as the great names of Eleusis. The city is governed, we see, by several kings, or chiefs. Their relative rank we cannot clearly discern, but Keleos, the father of the kind daughters, seems to be first. Presently we shall find him summoning the people to the assembly in Homeric fashion. But that several chiefs should be found in the exercise of something like a joint and equal authority, is already a departure from Homeric rule, and seems to show that the poem belongs to the period of transition between monarchy and obligarchy in early Greece. These names of Keleos and Metaneira his wife remain constant, in nearly all forms of the story, for the couple of whom the disconsolate goddess first receives hospitality; with this difference, that one sophisticated form of it represents the couple, not as king and queen of the heroic age, but as peasant gaffer and gammer. The other names of the Eleusinian chiefs vary. Two of them only, Triptolemos and Eumolpos, it is important that the reader should bear in mind. Triptolemos, as the hero whom Demeter, after her reconciliation, commissioned to go forth over the world with the gift of corn to men, is a very great personage indeed. Usually, it is he that is represented as the little son of Keleos and Metaneira, the foster-child of Demeter; here, however, he is not that, but simply one among the other chiefs of the place. As for Eumolpos, the name in historical times was a hereditary name at Eleusis, and the high priest of the goddess was chosen invariably from the house of the Eumolpidae. The tradition was, that the original Eumolpos, the founder of the family, had been a son of the sea, who came from Thrace, conquered Eleusis, introduced into the worship of the Eleusinian goddesses new and mystic elements which he brought with him from the North, and by-and-by made war upon Erechtheus, King of Athens. Many of our readers no doubt have at this moment in their ears the thunder of that very warfare, as it rolls along the verses of Mr. Swinburne's recent play, *Erechtheus*. Later on in our own hymn, we shall find in the mouth

of Demeter what reads like a confused prophecy of this famous war; but in this place the singer seems to treat Eumolpos, too, as simply a native chief among the rest. To return, now, to our king's daughters:—"So they came quickly to their father's palace, and speedily told their mother all they had seen and heard; and she bade them run swiftly and invite the dame to service at a noble wage. And they, as young kids or heifers in spring-time leap along the meadow when they have had their fill of pasture, even so the maidens raced along the sunken cartway, holding up the folds of their lovely linen raiment as they went, and their crocus-coloured hair went streaming about their shoulders. And they found the excellent goddess beside the road, where they left her before. Then they led the way to the loved mansion of their sire. And the goddess walked behind, sore at heart, close-hooded from the head down; and her sable cloak shook ripplingly about the slender feet of the goddess. Ere long they came to the mansion of Keleos, and went in through the porch, where the queen their mother sat beside the pillar that sustained the well-wrought roof, holding at her breast a child, a new-born blossom. And the maidens ran to her side. And the goddess stood with her feet upon the threshold, and her head touched the rafter, and she filled the doorway with divine light. And awe fell upon Metaneira, and worship, yea, and pale fear. And she gave place upon the couch and bade her be seated; but Demeter, she that ripens fair seasons and gives shining gifts, would not be seated upon the polished chair, but abode in silence with her beautiful eyes cast down; until Iambe, skilled in serviceable things, set a chair for her and threw a white fleece over it; therein she sat her down, and held her hood before her face with her hands, and abode for a long while in her bitter mood, speechless in her chair, and made salutation to none either by word or sign, but sat and smiled not, neither tasted food nor drink, wasting with desire after her full-girdled daughter; until Iambe, skilled in serviceable things, fell to jesting before her with many a merry gibe, and so turned the holy queen to smile and laugh and bear a cheerful mind (*Now, ever afterwards this merry rite hath pleased her well.*) And then Metaneira filled a cup of honey-sweet wine and offered it her; but she put it away; for she declared it was not lawful for her to drink red wine, but bade Metaneira mix meal and water and smooth poppy-seed and give her that to drink. And Metaneira mixed the drink and gave it her as she bade; and Queen Deo for her godhead's sake received and drank it."

The above passage—not free from holes and stitchings of the text—is curious. It is the first of several in which the poet interrupts the flow of his narrative (or some subsequent interpolator interrupts it for him) in order to insist on points of special religious or prophetic significance. Here, for instance, our attention is drawn to the origin of two customs which in historical times formed part of the established ritual of the Eleusinian festival. At a particular point on the line of the procession from

Athens to Eleusis, persons were stationed whose duty it was to flout and jeer at the votaries as they passed; that, then, was in memory of those pranks by which Metaneira's maid had brought the first laugh to the lips of the goddess in her distress—pranks coarse enough, according to the more definite description we find in other versions. Later on in the solemnities, when the votaries had fasted for a prescribed period, the food on which they broke their fast was a brose, or gruel, compounded of water, meal, and poppy-seed; this, then, was in memory of the first sustenance which, after her calamity, had crossed the lips of the goddess herself. The story goes on:—

“And before them all the fair-girdled Metaneira began to speak:—  
 ‘Peace be with thee, dame, since I deem thee sprung not from base parents but from noble; upon thine eyes, as upon the eyes of justice-dealing kings, awe and grace dwell visibly. But vex ourselves as we may, needs must we mortals take the gifts the gods bestow on us; for the yoke lieth upon our necks. And now thou art come hither, all that is mine shall be thine. Nurse then this child, whom late and past hope the immortals gave me; full many a prayer he cost. If thou shouldst nurse him up, and he should reach the blooming time of youth, then any woman might certainly envy thee when she looked on thee, so great rewards would I give thee for thy nursing.’ And Demeter of the goodly crown answered her again, ‘Peace be with thee too, lady, and may the gods give thee good gifts. Thy child I will take willingly according to thy word. I will nurse him, and not through carelessness of his nurse, I ween, shall spell be cast upon him to injure him, for against wicked spells I know a charm more potent’” (the words are here obscure and untranslatable.) “So said she, and took the child in her fragrant bosom, and into her immortal hands; and the mother’s heart rejoiced. So the goddess brought up within the house the man-child Demophoon, the noble son of trusty Keleos, whom the fair-girdled Metaneira bore him. And he began to grow up like a god, neither eating food nor sucking the breast. Day by day Demeter anointed him with ambrosia, like a child sprung from the loins of a god, breathing sweet breath upon him and holding him in her bosom; and night by night she hid him away like a brand in the midst of the fire, unseen by the parents that loved him. And to them it had grown a great marvel how he was waxing strong before his time, and becoming in countenance as the gods. And she would have made him exempt from age and death, but that upon a night the fair-girdled Metaneira in her foolishness kept watch from within her fragrant chamber, and shrieked, and smote her thighs, and uttered winged words with wailing:—‘Demophoon, my child, the strange woman is putting thee in the hot fire, and bringing misery upon me and bitter woe.’ So wailed the mother, and the divine goddess heard her. Then Demeter of the goodly crown was wrath against her, and plucked the child out of the fire in her fierce indignation, and put it away from

her on the ground with her immortal hands, and cried vehemently to the fair-girdled Metaneira :—

“Oh purblind race! Oh senseless mortals! to foreknow not the doom of good neither of evil that cometh on; lo! now, by thine own foolishness thou hast ruined thyself past cure. Witness the unsweet waves of Styx, the oath the gods swear by, I would have made thy child exempt from death and age for all time, and would have given him undying honour. But now there is no way for him to escape mortality and the fates. Yet shall honour undying be upon him for ever, forasmuch as he rode upon our knees and slept in our arms. *And in his time shall the sons of the Eleusinians wage war continually against one another*”—or, *against the Athenians*; the text is out of order; and the prophecy would seem to have reference to those wars between Eleusis and Athens with which the name of Eumolpos is usually associated. “I am Demeter, honour is unto me, who am the chief created blessing and delight of gods and men. And now let all the people build me a great temple and an altar upon the hill beneath the town and its lofty wall, above the Dancers’ fountain; and I myself will teach ye my rites, that hereafter ye may perform them piously and have my mind favourable unto ye.”

“When she had spoken thus, the goddess changed her form and stature, casting off old age, and beauty breathed from round about her, and from her perfumed robes was shed a fragrance making the heart to yearn, and a light shone out from the celestial flesh of the goddess, and her golden hair streamed down her shoulders, and the house was filled in all its chambers with a radiance as of lightning. And she strode out through the chambers. But for the mother, immediately her knees were loosened, and she was speechless for a long time, and gave not one thought to her little son to lift him from the ground. But his sisters heard the pitiful outcry that he made, and thereat leapt up from their soft strewn beds; then one took up the child in her hands and put it in her bosom, and another made up the fire, and another ran upon her soft feet, thinking to wake up their mother out of her perfumed chamber. And so, gathering round about him where he lay struggling, they bathed him and made much of him; but he would not be comforted, for indeed they were poor nurses to the last that minded him now.”

Thus we leave the little Demophoon, and hear of him no more. The episode has been so highly wrought that we naturally expect the sequel, and so engaging that we cannot but long for it; but we are disappointed. Taking the foster-child of Demeter to be called, not Demophoon, but Triptolemos—and that, says Pausanias, was the popular Athenian belief—the sequel would be this: that the goddess, when the mother’s folly has spoiled her purpose of purging the child’s mortality clean away from him, still does not lose her interest in him, but presently sends him abroad as her minister, on her winged car with its team of



dragons, to carry the gift of corn to all nations. That is the "undying honour" which she reserves for him, when to exempt him from age and death is put beyond her power. In this character, as distributing the gift of grain from place to place, Triptolemos was the patron hero of the Greeks in their agricultural occupations. Separate hymns, of something like the age and style of this one, are sure to have existed in his honour. We know that Sophokles made him the hero of a play. On vase-paintings, the most popular and familiar form of art, his is a very favourite figure. But our poet, not being specially concerned with Demeter and Persephone as deities of agriculture, though he mentions the name Triptolemos three times, does not dwell upon it at all. On the story of Demeter's foster-child, as illustrating her power over the mysteries of mortality and immortality, he does dwell up to the point where her nursing comes to an end; but without either allowing us to identify the child as Triptolemos, or giving the narrative another continuation of his own. Leaving us thus in the dark, he goes on to the sequel of Demeter's doings; to the destiny of Persephone in the world below; her re-union with her mother; and lastly, to what especially concerns and attracts him, the titles of the two as deities of death and another life, and the installation at Eleusis of a new worship and a solemn ritual in their honour.

"And the women, shaking with dread, besought the excellent goddess of her grace the whole night long, and at the first dawn of day told the story faithfully to King Keleos, even as Demeter enjoined them, the goddess of the goodly crown. And the king summoned to the market-place the people of all those borders, and commanded them to build upon the jutting hill a rich temple and an altar to the fair-haired Demeter. And immediately they obeyed, and hearkened to his voice, and wrought as he commanded; and the temple rose by the god's grace. And when they had finished, and rested from their labour, they departed each to his own house. And the golden-haired Demeter sat her down and abode in that place, apart from all the immortals, wasting away with desire for her full-girdled daughter. And she made for mortals upon the populous earth a year most terrible and bitter. Not one seed did the soil send up, for Demeter kept them back; and many a curved ploughshare the oxen dragged through the fields in vain,\* and much white barley fell for nought upon the ground. A little while, and she would have destroyed by cruel famine the whole race of men that utter speech, yea, and have caused the gods that dwell in the mansions of Olympos to forfeit their honourable dues of gifts and sacrifices, but that Zeus took heed and counsel within himself. First he sent forth the golden-winged Iris to summon the beauteous Demeter; and Iris hearkened to Zeus, son of Kronos, king of clouds and darkness, and ran swiftly upon her feet over the space between. And she came to the

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\* Compare the *Midsummer Night's Dream* :—

"The ox hath therefore stretched his yoke in vain."

city of Eleusis, the sweet-smelling place of sacrifices, and found Demeter within the temple in her sable robes, and spoke winged words to her :— 'Demeter, father Zeus of his immortal wisdom summons thee to come among the companies of the ever-living gods. Come, then, and let not the word I bring from Zeus want fulfilling.' So spake she, beseeching, but the mind of the goddess was not moved to hearken. Next the father sent forth all, even all, the blessed gods that live for ever ; and they went to her one after the other, and offered many goodly gifts and honours, whatsoever she should choose, among the immortal gods. But not one of them could prevail upon her thoughts nor her inclination nor her spirit in her anger ; stubbornly she said them nay, and declared that she would never go up to Olympos, the house of sacrifices, nor ever let fruit come out of the ground, until first she should set eyes again upon her own beautiful daughter.

"And when the loud-thundering far-seeing Zeus heard what she declared, to Erebos he sent the slayer of Argos with his golden wand, that he might prevail upon Aïdes with gentle words, and, the god willing, bring back the pure Persephoneia from beneath the place of mists and darkness into the light, in order that her mother might set eyes on her again and put away her wrath. And Hermes was not disobedient, but straightway departed from the seat of Olympos, and leapt down quickly beneath the hollows of the earth. And he found that Lord abiding within his house, sitting upon the couch with his bride in her majesty, whom desire after her mother kept sorrowful . . . And the strong slayer of Argos stood near and said—'Dark-haired Aïdes, thou that art lord over the dead, Zeus our sire hath commanded me to bring forth among them from Erebos the noble Persephoneia, in order that her mother having beheld her may cease from her wrath and great indignation against the immortals ; forasmuch as she meditates a monstrous deed, to make perish in their feebleness the tribes of men born upon the earth, keeping back the seed under the ground, and minishing to nought the dues of the immortals. A terrible anger she bears, and mixes not with the gods, but keeping the hill-set city of Eleusis, sits apart within the temple of her sacrifices.' So said he, and Aidoneus, lord of the shades, smiled with his brows, and was not disobedient to the commands of Zeus the king, but straightway charged the wise Persephoneia, saying, 'Go, Persephone, to the side of thy mother in her mourning raiment, bearing in thy bosom a mind and spirit of gentleness ; and be not displeased overmuch ; indeed I will be no ungentle husband to thee among the immortals, own brother as I am to Zeus thy sire. Thou shalt go where they bid thee, and shalt have sovereignty over all things that live and move, and shalt possess the highest honour among the immortals.' Thus he said, and the wise Persephoneia was glad, and suddenly leapt up for joy. But her lord stealthily gave her honey-sweet seed of pomegranate to eat, having taken thought for himself that she might not remain all her days away beside

the dark-robed Demeter in her majesty. And Aidoneus first of all harnessed his immortal horses to his golden car. And she went up into the car, and beside her the strong slayer of Argos took the reins and whip between his hands, and dashed forth through the chambers; and the pair flew with a will; and the long ways were quickly consumed before them; neither sea nor river-waters nor grassy dells nor mountain-summits stayed the pace of these immortal horses, but aloft above all these they cleft the deep air in their going. And he stopped in his driving where Demeter abode before the temple of her sacrifices. And when she beheld her daughter, she rushed as a Maenad rushes along a mountain shagged with wood. And Persephone from her side rushed"—Here comes a spoiled place in the manuscript; but one gathers from the broken words that remain, the passionate greetings of the two, their embraces, the mother's questions to her child—has she eaten dead men's food? if not, then she may stay among the Olympians for ever; yes, she has eaten; then the doom is that she must stay among them but for two-thirds of each year, and must go down to her lord among the dead for the other third. "'And as soon as the earth blossoms again with flowers of all sweet savours, then thou shalt come up again from the place of mist and darkness, a great miracle to gods and men. And by what bait did he beguile thee, the strong Lord to whose house all come?' And the beauteous Persephone answered her back, 'Now, mother, I will tell thee all the truth. When Hermes, the swift serviceable messenger, came from Zeus my sire and the rest of the heavenly ones, to bid me forth from Erebos, that thou mightest set eyes on me and cease from thy wrath and fierce indignation against the immortals, immediately I leapt up for joy; then it was that he stealthily made me eat honey-sweet seed of pomegranate for food. And how before that he seized me and was gone, bearing me away beneath the hollows of the land, by the close purposes of Kronides my sire, that tale too I will tell thee and go through even as thou inquirest. We maidens all—Leukippè and Phaino and Electra and Ianthè and Melitè and Iachè and Rhodeia, and Kallirhoè with her looks like a flower-bud, and Chryseïs and Ianeira and Akastè and Admètè, and Rhodopè and Plouto and the sweet Kalypso, and Styx and Urania and Galaxaura the lovely—well, we maidens are playing all, and gathering in our hands beautiful flowers of all sorts—tender crocuses, and flags, and hyacinths, and roses in bud, and lilies wonderful to behold, and narcissus a giant one which the broad earth produced. So I was gathering for myself in delight, when the earth opened from beneath, and there leapt up the strong Lord to whose house all come, and went carrying me under the ground in my own sore despite; and I cried with a loud voice. For all my misery, this is the whole truth that I tell you.'

"In such wise they continued to comfort one another all day long, making much of one another and having one mind together; and their heart was eased of troubles; and each gave and took delight of the other.

Then the bright-veiled Hekate came nigh them; much joy made she over the holy daughter of Demeter, and from that time forth has been minister and companion to the Queen. Then Zeus sent a messenger into the midst of these, even the beautiful-haired Rhea, with charge to bring the dark-cloaked Demeter among the companies of the gods; and he promised that he would grant her whatever honours she should choose among the immortal gods, and consented that her child should spend a third part of the revolving year beneath the nether darkness, but two parts beside her mother and the rest of the immortals. And Rhea disobeyed not, but made haste down from the summits of Olympos, and came to the Rharian plain, even the plain where crops plenteously sucked life of yore, but life at this time it yielded none, nay, but stood idle without one blade, and kept the white barley buried according to the intents of the fairy-ankled Demeter; nevertheless the hour was at hand when it would wave again all at once with spikes of corn. Thither Rhea descended first out of the empty air. And they beheld each other with gladness, and rejoiced at heart. And the bright-veiled Rhea bespoke her thus:—"Hither, child: the loud-thundering far-seeing Zeus invites thee to come among the companies of the gods, and has promised to give thee whatever honours thou mayest choose," (the text suffers here) "and thy child shall spend a third part of the year in the nether shades, but two parts with thee and the other immortals. Hearken, then, to what I tell unto thee, and be not angry overmuch, but suffer to grow the fruit which giveth life to men." Thus said she, and Demeter disobeyed not, but immediately let the seed spring up from the fat-clodded fields; and the whole broad earth was laden with leaves and flowers. And the goddess went, and taught the service of her mysteries to the justice-dealing kings, even Triptolemos, and the driver Diokles, and the strong Eumolpos, and Keleos the ruler of the people, and appointed the goodly rites and solemn ministries which it is in no wise lawful either to transgress nor to divulge," (these last words, again, are but conjectural, because of injury to the writing.) "*Blessed among men,*" the poem goes on, impressively, "*blessed among men upon the earth is he that hath beheld these things; but he that hath no part nor share in our solemnities, never shall he have the like blessings beneath the mouldering shades when his day is done.*" So when the divine goddess had made an end of her teaching, they set forth to go to Olympos among the assembly of the other gods. And there they dwell, beside Zeus that exulteth in his thunder; awe and majesty are upon them; very blessed upon the earth is the man to whom those holy ones incline favourably; lightly they send Ploutos, who giveth abundance to mortals, to abide beside the hearth in the mansion of him they love."

"*Blessed is he that hath beheld these things*"—"very blessed upon the earth is the man to whom those holy ones incline,"—such, and equally solemn, is the testimony of all antiquity from first to last. That which our singer avers, in early days of Greek society, Isokrates repeats, when

he ascribes to the Eleusinian goddesses the two best of all gifts—the fruits of the earth, and the rite of initiation—and Cicero re-echoes, when he speaks with bated breath of that holy and august Eleusis. But wherein, precisely, the excellence and sanctity of the Eleusinian rites consisted, and what the initiation was, we nowhere learn. Even of the ceremonial and circumstances of the festival, we know less than we know in the case of many festivals of far less importance. Volumes of erudition have been devoted to the subject; but the result comes to little more than this; that at the approach of the September full moon the multitudes desirous of attending the festival used to assemble at Athens; that before noon on a certain day, the procession used to set out, and move slowly by the Sacred Way, past the olive groves of the Kephissos, through the pass of Mount Aigealos (now called the pass of Daphni), and round the shores of the bay, to the Thriasian plain, where it would arrive at midnight; that this first night was spent in torchlight dances, with wild song and revelry, upon the plain; that the days which followed were days of fasting and purification; and then came the days dedicated to the successive stages of the mysteries properly so called. The efficacy of these depended, not on anything which the votary learned, but on something which he saw; not on any knowledge or dogmatic revelation imparted to him within the sanctuary, but on scenes witnessed there, and on the mood or state of feeling into which the scenes threw him. He is always spoken of not as a disciple, but as a spectator, or looker-on. The mysteries into which he is initiated are things done, acted, or performed. Scenes, they are reverentially called, “not to be talked of;” to divulge them was a sin; and undivulged, for us they accordingly remain. Pausanias, when he is coming near the point, checks himself and says: “as to what I saw within the sanctuary, not only was I forbidden by a dream to tell it, but, as the uninitiated are kept from witnessing these things, so it is plain they have no right to learn them by hearsay.” We can, however, with certainty infer from the hints that reach us, that what had so powerful an effect upon the minds of the worshippers was a kind of show, or series of stage representations, setting forth the episodes of the story we have just read. These representations the priests would conduct within the temple, according to a prescribed order, with music and great solemnity. They would be watched by those quick spectators with a passion of sympathy. The tribulation of Demeter would be entered into with tears. The resurrection of Persephone from Erebus, accompanied with illumination and acclaim, would be witnessed with an ecstasy of rejoicing. Having participated, after much discipline and preparation, in the triumph of that moment, the initiated would learn to realise and hold fast the hope of some kindred triumph for themselves. The goddesses who had so vindicated their power over death and the grave, and with whose sorrows their own hearts had beaten in unison but now, would surely not desert them in the latter day. Whatever might be the lot of others, they at least when they

passed to the shadowy kingdom would be preferred in the sight of its Queen.

Something like this, for nearer we cannot come to it, was what the Greek experienced in the act of initiation. Therefore it is with no idle tongue, nor with thoughts too alien from our own, it is with a piety into which we do not find it hard to enter, that our singer turns again to the divine mother and her child, and takes leave of them with a last invocation :—"Be favourable unto us now, thou that holdest in thy hand the people of Eleusis, the sweet-smelling place of sacrifices, and Paros that the sea flows round, and rocky Antron ; Mistress and Queen, Deo, giver of bright gifts and ripener of fair seasons, thou and thy beauteous daughter Persephone, be favourable unto us, incline thine ear towards us, and recompense our song with pleasantness of days."

S. C.

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## The Quick March of the Fourteenth Regiment.

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[On May 23, 1793, my grandfather Welbore Ellis Doyle rallied his regiment—the 14th of the Line—then wavering under a heavy fire, and stormed the fortified camp of Famars, after a very severe action, to the tune of *Ça Ira*. For many years this tune continued to be the quick march of the 14th Regiment. I understand that of late years the tradition has ceased to operate, and that the march is disused, or, at least, that its origin has been forgotten.]

WHEN first the might of France was set  
 'Gainst creeds and laws, long years ago,  
 And the great strife—not ended yet—  
 Tossed crowns and nations to and fro,  
 Now buried deep beneath those wars  
 That since have made the earth their prey,  
 Our hard-won triumph at Famars  
 Was famous in its day.

*Here*—trained through stedfast work, and drilled  
 Till as one thought they moved along,  
 By the old land's old memories filled,  
 Our English lads were calm and strong.  
*There*—drunk on hope as on new wine,  
 That in their veins like madness wrought,  
 With power half-devilish, half-divine,  
 Each restless Frenchman fought.

Wealth, numbers, skill they heeded not,  
 Trampling them down as common things;  
 Man's spirit was a fire, made hot  
 To burn away the strength of kings.  
 Thus armed, as roars before the blast  
 At forest trees a prairie flame,  
 On our firm silence, fiercely fast  
 Their howling frenzy came—

Until (why shun the truth to speak ?)  
 The courage rooted in the past  
 Struck, as by sudden storms, grew weak,  
 And wavered like a wavering mast :  
 Still kept their time the well-taught feet,  
 Nor dreamed the soldier yet of flight,  
 Though deepening shadows of defeat  
 Fell on him, like a blight.

Straight out in front their leader dashed  
 (A God-given king of men was he),  
 And from his bright looks on them flashed  
 One sparkle of heroic glée :  
 "They hold us cheap," (he cried) "too soon,  
 We'll break them, frantic as they are,  
 Unto their own accursed tune ;  
 Strike up then *Ça Ira*."

The drums exulting thundered forth,  
 Whilst yet with trumpet tones he spoke,  
 And in those strong sons of the North  
 The old Berserker laugh awoke.  
 Their bayonets glowed with life, their eyes  
 Shone out to greet that eagle glance,  
 And, in her rush, a strange surprise  
 Palsied the steps of France.

Then, like a stream that bursts its banks,\*  
 To *Ça Ira* from fifes and drums,  
 Upon their crushed and shattered ranks  
 The cataract charge of England comes ;

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\* This line is from *Rokeby*. I borrowed it unconsciously at the moment, and thought afterwards that Scott was quite rich enough to lend it to me without feeling the loss.

Whilst their own conquering music leapt  
 Forth in wild mirth to feel them run;  
 Right o'er the ridge that host was swept,  
 And the grim battle won.

Thus, in the face of heaven and earth,  
 From their first home those notes they tore  
 To live, as by a second birth,  
 Linked fast with England evermore.  
 Yes, evermore, that through them still  
 To coming ages might be shown,  
 Whose arrowy thought and iron will  
 Had made that prize his own.

Thence, as each panting year rushed by  
 With garments rolled in blood—His march  
 Went sounding onwards, far and nigh—  
 Beneath cold rains, or suns that parch,  
 Northward or southward—east or west,  
 Where still the heirs of that renown,  
 Behind some other colonel, pressed  
 To the field hurrying down.

For him, alas! on Java's shore  
 It throbbed unheard through purple skies,  
 Nor marked he, under dark Bhurtpore,  
 The blood-bought battle-hymn arise.  
 New Zealand's fern-gloom, as they slept,  
 Might quiver to that piercing tone,  
 But him it stirred not, where he slept  
 In a far land—alone.

And, whilst o'er its old ground, the strain  
 Smote with high scorn our ancient foe,  
 Called he upon those drums again?  
 Shared he their closing rapture? No!

His grave lay deep in dust, before  
They pealed through Belgian corn-crops, when  
The baffled Eagle fell, no more  
To tear the hearts of men.

Yes, he died young, and all in vain  
We dream how much he left undone,  
Painting, upon an idle brain,  
The glorious course he should have run.  
Forgotten by the reckless years,  
He rests apart—and makes no sign—  
Even his proud march no longer cheers  
The Fourteenth of the Line.

Still, if elsewhere of this no trace  
Remain, by some as worthy deed,  
Oh, youthful soldiers of his race,  
Against oblivion for it plead.  
Thus, if his death-lamp have grown dim,  
Re-light it; thus force Time to spare  
This leaf of laurel, earned by him  
For the old name we bear.

FRANCIS HASTINGS DOYLE.

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## Walking Tours.

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It must not be imagined that a walking tour, as some would have us fancy, is merely a better or worse way of seeing the country. There are many ways of seeing landscape quite as good; and none more vivid, in spite of canting dilettantes, than from a railway train. But landscape on a walking tour is quite accessory. He who is indeed of the brotherhood does not voyage in quest of the picturesque, but of certain jolly humours—of the hope and spirit with which the march begins at morning, and the peace and spiritual repletion of the evening's rest. He cannot tell whether he puts his knapsack on, or takes it off, with more delight. The excitement of the departure puts him in key for that of the arrival. Whatever he does is not only a reward in itself, but will be further rewarded in the sequel; and so pleasure leads on to pleasure in an endless chain. It is this that so few can understand; they will either be always lounging, or always at five miles an hour; they do not play off the one against the other, prepare all day for the evening, and all evening for the next day. And, above all, it is here that your over-walker fails of comprehension. His heart rises against those who drink their curaçoa in liqueur glasses, when he himself can swill it in a brown john. He will not believe that the flavour is more delicate in the smaller dose. He will not believe that to walk this unconscionable distance is merely to stupify and brutalise himself, and come to his inn, at night, with a sort of frost on his five wits, and a starless night of darkness in his spirit. Not for him the mild luminous evening of the temperate walker! He has nothing left of man but a physical need for bedtime and a double nightcap; and even his pipe, if he be a smoker, will be savourless and disenchanted. It is the fate of such an one to take twice as much trouble as is needed to obtain happiness, and miss the happiness in the end; he is the man of the proverb, in short, who goes farther and fares worse.

Now, to be properly enjoyed, a walking tour should be gone upon alone. If you go in a company, or even in pairs, it is no longer a walking tour in anything but name; it is something else and more in the nature of a picnic. It should be gone upon alone, because freedom is of the essence; because you should be able to stop and go on, and follow this way or that, as the freak takes you; and because you must have your own pace, and neither trot alongside a champion walker, nor mince in time with a girl. And then you must be open to all impressions and let your thoughts take colour from what you see. You should be as a

pipe for any wind to play upon. "I cannot see the wit," says Hazlitt, "of walking and talking at the same time. When I am in the country I wish to vegetate like the country." Which is the gist of all that can be said upon the matter. There should be no cackle of voices at your elbow, to jar on the meditative silence of the morning. And so long as a man is reasoning he cannot surrender himself to that fine intoxication that comes of much motion in the open air, that begins in a sort of dazzle and sluggishness of the brain, and ends in a peace that passes comprehension.

During the first day or so of any tour there are moments of bitterness, when the traveller feels more than coldly towards his knapsack, when he is half in a mind to throw it bodily over the hedge and, like Christian on a similar occasion, "give three leaps and go on singing." And yet it soon acquires a property of easiness. It becomes magnetic; the spirit of the journey enters into it. And no sooner have you passed the straps over your shoulder than the lees of sleep are cleared from you, you pull yourself together with a shake, and fall at once into your stride. And surely, of all possible moods, this, in which a man takes the road, is the best. Of course, if he *will* keep thinking of his anxieties, if he *will* open the merchant Abudah's chest and walk arm-in-arm with the hag—why, wherever he is, and whether he walk fast or slow, the chances are that he will not be happy. And so much the more shame to himself! There are perhaps thirty men setting forth at that same hour, and I would lay a large wager there is not another dull face among the thirty. It would be a fine thing to follow, in a coat of darkness, one after another of these wayfarers, some summer morning, for the first few miles upon the road. This one, who walks fast, with a keen look in his eyes, is all concentrated in his own mind; he is up at his loom, weaving and weaving, to set the landscape to words. This one peers about, as he goes, among the grasses; he waits by the canal to watch the dragon-flies; he leans on the gate of the pasture, and cannot look enough upon the complacent kine. And here comes another, talking, laughing, and gesticulating to himself. His face changes from time to time, as indignation flashes from his eyes or anger clouds his forehead. He is composing articles, delivering orations, and conducting the most impassioned interviews, by the way. A little farther on, and it is as like as not he will begin to sing. And well for him, supposing him to be no great master in that art, if he stumble across no stolid peasant at a corner; for, on such an occasion, I scarcely know which is the more troubled, or whether it is worse to suffer the confusion of your troubadour, or the unfeigned alarm of your clown. A sedentary population, accustomed, besides, to the strange mechanical bearing of the common tramp, can in no wise explain to itself the gaiety of these passers by. I knew one man who was arrested as a runaway lunatic, because, although a full-grown person with a red beard, he skipped as he went like a child. And you would be astonished if I were to tell you all the grave and learned heads



who have confessed to me that, when on walking tours, they sang—and sang very ill—and had a pair of red ears when, as described above, the inauspicious peasant plumped into their arms from round a corner. And here, lest you should think I am exaggerating, is Hazlitt's own confession, from his essay *On Going a Journey*, which is so good that there should be a tax levied on all who have not read it:—

"Give me the clear blue sky over my head," says he, "and the green turf beneath my feet, a winding road before me, and a three hours' march to dinner—and then to thinking! It is hard if I cannot start some game on these lone heaths. I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy."

Bravo! After that adventure of my friend with the policeman, you would not have cared, would you, to publish that in the first person? But we have no bravery now-a-days, and, even in books, must all pretend to be as dull and foolish as our neighbours. It was not so with Hazlitt. And notice how learned he is (as, indeed, throughout the essay) in the theory of walking tours. He is none of your athletic men in purple stockings, who walk their fifty miles a day: three hours' march is his ideal. And then he must have a winding road, the epicure!

Yet there is one thing I object to in these words of his, one thing in the great master's practice that seems to me not wholly wise. I do not approve of that leaping and running. Both of these hurry the respiration; they both shake up the brain out of its glorious open-air confusion; and they both break the pace. Uneven walking is not so agreeable to the body, and it distracts and irritates the mind. Whereas, when once you have fallen into an equable stride, it requires no conscious thought from you to keep it up, and yet it prevents you from thinking earnestly of anything else. Like knitting, like the work of a copying clerk, it gradually neutralises and sets to sleep the serious activity of the mind. We can think of this or that, lightly and laughingly, as a child thinks, or as we think in a morning doze; we can make puns or puzzle out acrostics, and trifle in a thousand ways with words and rhymes; but when it comes to honest work, when we come to gather ourselves together for an effort, we may sound the trumpet as loud and as long as we please; the great barons of the mind will not rally to the standard, but sit, each one, at home, warming his hands over his own fire and brooding on his own private thought!

In the course of a day's walk, you see, there is much variance in the mood. From the exhilaration of the start, to the happy phlegm of the arrival, the change is certainly great. As the day goes on, the traveller moves from the one extreme towards the other. He becomes more and more incorporated with the material landscape, and the open-air drunkenness grows upon him with great strides, until he posts along the road, and sees every thing about him, as in a cheerful dream. The first is certainly brighter, but the second stage is the more peaceful. A man does not make so many articles towards the end, nor does he laugh aloud; but

the purely animal pleasures, the sense of physical well-being, the delight of every inhalation, of every time the muscles tighten down the thigh, console him for the absence of the others, and bring him to his destination still content.

Nor must I forget to say a word on bivouacs. You come to a milestone on a hill, or some place where deep ways meet under trees; and off goes the knapsack, and down you sit to smoke a pipe in the shade. You sink into yourself, and the birds come round and look at you; and your smoke dissipates upon the afternoon under the blue dome of heaven; and the sun lies warm upon your feet, and the cool air visits your neck and turns aside your open shirt. If you are not happy, you must have an evil conscience. You may dally as long as you like by the roadside. It is almost as if the millennium were arrived, when we shall throw our clocks and watches over the housetop, and remember times and seasons no more. Not to keep hours for a lifetime is, I was going to say, to live for ever. You have no idea, unless you have tried it, how endlessly long is a summer's day, that you measure out only by hunger, and bring to an end only when you are drowsy. I know a village where there are hardly any clocks, where no one knows more of the days of the week than by a sort of instinct for the Fête on Sundays, and where only one person can tell you the day of the month, and she is generally wrong; and, if people were aware how slow Time journeyed in that village, and what armfuls of spare hours he gives, over and above the bargain, to its wise inhabitants, I believe there would be a stampede out of London, Liverpool, Paris, and a variety of large towns, where the clocks lose their heads, and shake the hours out each one faster than the other, as though they were all in a wager. And all these foolish pilgrims would each bring his own misery along with him, in a watch-pocket! It is to be noticed, there were no clocks and watches in the much-vaunted days before the flood. It follows of course, there were no appointments, and punctuality was not yet thought upon. "Though ye take from a covetous man all his treasure," says Milton, "he has yet one jewel left; ye cannot deprive him of his covetousness." And so I would say of a modern man of business, you may do what you will for him, put him in Eden, give him the elixir of life—he has still a flaw at heart, he still has his business habits. Now, there is no time when business habits are more mitigated than on a walking tour. And so during these halts, as I say, you will feel almost free.

But it is at night, and after dinner, that the best hour comes. There are no such pipes to be smoked as those that follow a good day's march; the flavour of the tobacco is a thing to be remembered, it is so dry and aromatic, so full and so fine. If you wind up the evening with grog, you will own there was never such grog; at every sip a jocund tranquillity spreads about your limbs, and sits easily in your heart. If you read a book—and you will never do so save by fits and starts—you find the language strangely racy and harmonious; words take a new

meaning; single sentences possess the ear for half an hour together; and the writer endears himself to you, at every page, by the nicest coincidence of sentiment. It seems as if it were a book you had written yourself in a dream! To all we have read on such occasions we look back with special favour. "It was on the 10th of April, 1798," says Hazlitt, with amorous precision, "that I sat down to a volume of the new *Héloïse*, at the Inn at Llangollen, over a bottle of sherry and a cold chicken." I should wish to quote more, for though we are mighty fine fellows now-a-days, we cannot write like Hazlitt. And, talking of that, a volume of Hazlitt's essays would be a capital pocket-book on such a journey; so would a volume of Heine's songs; and for *Tristram Shandy* I can pledge a fair experience.

If the evening be fine and warm, there is nothing better in life than to lounge before the inn door in the sunset, or lean over the parapet of the bridge, to watch the weeds and the quick fishes. It is then, if ever, that you taste Joviality to the full significance of that audacious word. Your muscles are so agreeably slack, you feel so clean and so strong and so idle, that whether you move or sit still, whatever you do is done with pride and a kingly sort of pleasure. You fall in talk with anyone, wise or foolish, drunk or sober. And it seems as if a hot walk purged you, more than of anything else, of all narrowness and pride, and left curiosity to play its part freely, as in a child or a man of science. You lay aside all your own hobbies, to watch provincial humours develope themselves before you, now as a laughable farce, and now grave and beautiful like an old tale.

Or perhaps you are left to your own company for the night, and surly weather imprisons you by the fire. You may remember how Burns, numbering past pleasures, dwells upon the hours when he has been "happy thinking." It is a phrase that may well perplex a poor modern, girt about on every side by clocks and chimes, and haunted, even at night, by flaming dial plates. For we are all so busy, and have so many far-off projects to realise, and castles in the fire to turn into solid habitable mansions on a gravel soil, that we can find no time for pleasure trips into the Land of Thought and among the Hills of Vanity. Changed times, indeed, when we must sit all night, beside the fire, with folded hands; and a changed world for most of us, when we find we can pass the hours without discontent, and be happy thinking. We are in such haste to be doing, to be writing, to be gathering gear, to make our voice audible a moment in the derisive silence of eternity, that we forget that one thing, of which these are but the parts—namely, to live. We fall in love, we drink hard, we run to and fro upon the earth like frightened sheep. And now you are to ask yourself if, when all is done, you would not have been better to sit by the fire at home, and be happy thinking. To sit still and contemplate,—to remember the faces of women without desire, to be pleased by the great deeds of men without envy, to be everything and everywhere in sympathy, and yet content to

remain where and what you are—is not this to know both wisdom and virtue, and to dwell with happiness? After all, it is not they who carry flags, but they who look upon it from a private chamber, who have the fun of the procession. And once you are at that, you are in the very humour of all social heresy. It is no time for shuffling, or for big, empty words. If you ask yourself what you mean by fame, riches, or learning, the answer is far to seek; and you go back into that kingdom of light imaginations, which seems so vain in the eyes of Philistines perspiring after wealth, and so momentous to those who are stricken with the disproportions of the world, and, in the face of the gigantic stars, cannot stop to split differences between two degrees of the infinitesimally small, such as a tobacco pipe or the Roman Empire, a million of money or a fiddle-stick's end.

You lean from the window, your last pipe reeking whitely into the darkness, your body full of delicious pains, your mind enthroned in the seventh circle of content; when suddenly the mood changes, the weather-cock goes about, and you ask yourself one question more: whether, for the interval, you have been the wisest philosopher or the most egregious of donkeys? Human experience is not yet able to reply; but at least you have had a fine moment, and looked down upon all the kingdoms of the earth. And whether it was wise or foolish, to-morrow's travel will carry you, body and mind, into some different parish of the infinite.

R. L. S.

## Walther von der Vogelweide.

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WHEN the history of mediæval poetry comes to be written we shall understand, perhaps, what must remain very dark till then, how it was that during the marvellous twelfth century, amid all the chaos of the shattering and building of empires, such sudden simultaneous chords of melody were shot crosswise through the length and breadth of Europe, interpenetrating Iceland and Provence, Aquitaine and Austria, Normandy and Italy, with an irresistible desire for poetic production. In that mysterious atmosphere, in an air so burdened with electric force, the ordinary rules of germination and growth were set aside; out of barbarous races, and wielding the uncouthest of tongues, poets sprang full-armed, so many Athenes born suddenly adult from the forehead of the new Gothic civilization. That was an age of rapid movement and brilliant development, an age thirsting for discovery and invention, ready with one hand to fill the West with the new-found marvel of the pointed arch, with the other to push with sword and cross far into the fabulous East. It was at such a time, under such violent auspices, that poetry was born, full-grown, in Germany; the rude bud of folk-song blossoming in one single generation into the most elaborate art, only to wither again, as is the wont of such sudden blooms, in as short a time as it had taken to expand. No more such brilliant verse was written in German, until the time of Goethe, as was produced between the years 1150 and 1220, by a group of poets residing mainly at the courts of Austria and Thuringia. It would be out of place here to give any sketch, however slight, of the influences brought to bear upon them from without. We must hurry over the various cardinal points which demand mention before we can intelligibly introduce the subject of this memoir. It was about the year 1140 that an Austrian knight, whose name has not been preserved, gathered into epical shape the scattered ballads which form what we know as the *Nibelungenlied*. Somewhat later, another Austrian, of equally obscure personality, collected the priceless epos of *Kudrun*. The minne-song, the lyric of love, was at the same epoch invented or imported by the first great German lyrist, Heinrich von Veldecke, and his example was shortly followed by the simultaneous outburst of the four great poetic voices of mediæval Germany—the nightingales as they called themselves—Gottfried von Strassburg, Hermann von Ouwe, Wolfram von Eschenbach, and Walther von der Vogelweide. The genius of the first three of these was essentially epical. In the *Tristan* of Gottfried, in the *Iwein* of Hermann, in the

*Parzival* and the *Titurel* of Wolfram, we have the four great epics of romance literature, the four poetic pillars on which the whole structure of High-German language and literature rests. In these unique works, steeped in the purest colours of knight-errantry and chivalry, and written in verse-forms of astonishingly delicate art, we have in its original and undiluted form that spirit of romance that has so often since fascinated and bewitched the youth of Europe into more or less fatuous imitation. But this epical literature was not the sole product of the age; a lyrical growth accompanied it, represented by myriads of minor singers and one man that by common consent ranks as high as the three great epicists. This first of mediæval German song-writers was Walther von der Vogelweide.

Over the earliest years of his life there rests an obscurity which is likely to remain impenetrable. We know neither the year nor the place of his birth, his rank in society, nor the name of his family. In lack of clearer data than his own verses give us, we may roughly put his birth down at about the year 1170, or nearly a century before that of Dante. That he was of gentle, but not noble birth is judged by the title given him by all of his contemporaries of Meister Herr Walther, the "Herr" being the token of the knightly middle class. Over his appellation "von der Vogelweide" a great deal of ingenious speculation has been expended. "Walther of the Bird Meadow" has been fancifully supposed to be a name adopted by himself, either to signify that he was born in some hamlet secluded in the midst of the forest, among the birds, or else merely in token of his own great love for wild places and little birds. But *Vogelweide* is understood to mean *aviarium* in old High German, that is to say, an enclosed space where birds are artificially confined. It would therefore be difficult to believe that the lover of wild things would take this name from choice, and fortunately the difficulty has been cleared up very lately by the discovery in an old manuscript of the 13th century, of the existence of an estate called Vogelweide in the Tyrol, now long since disappeared, and there is little doubt that it was hence our poet came, especially as one of his friends and followers, a sweet minor minne-singer of that time, Leutolt von Seven, was born, we know, in that very valley in Tyrol. This mountain province, even in that early time, had not a little thirst after literary glory, and several of its poets, contemporary with Walther, have been fortunate enough to have their *Lieder* preserved, now to be piecemeal printed by modern admirers. Walther, however, was not satisfied with a local reputation, and very early in life he seems to have left the paternal home to seek his fortune in Vienna.

There was no more attractive city in Germany to a young man with his life before him than the capital of Austria in 1190. No part of the Empire was so prosperous or so devoted to the graceful arts as the neighbourhood of the Viennese court, and, what would have special fascination for Walther, nowhere were the poets so brilliant, so popular,



and so famous in their art. Jealous of the undisputed supremacy of Cologne, Vienna was taking advantage of its own security and prosperity to establish its position as the second city, at least, of the Empire, if it could not be the first. It seems that the raw lad from the Tyrol, with nothing to live on but his genius, came and put himself under the tuition of the most famous lyrist of that age, Reinmar the Old, and lost in the blaze of the Court and the noise of rival wits, we hear no more of him for eight years. It must not be imagined that he was idle during that time; it was no light task to learn to be a minne-singer. The poetry of that early age, so far from being the simple, wild-wood fluting that is idly and generally supposed, was a metrical art of the most elaborate kind, and one for the skilful performance of which a long and patient apprenticeship was needed. Out of the 188 poems of Walther's which exist, at least half are written in unique measures and all in forms of his own invention. He soon surpassed all his forerunners, even Reinmar himself, in the intricate mysteries of verse, and it is worthy of no small admiration how supple the stiff old High German becomes in his masterly hands. We shall return to this matter; for the present it may suffice to point out that the blank years 1190-1198 must have been full of laborious exercise, and that all in which he differs from other poets in this, is that he has not seen fit to hand down to us his *juvenilia*. At the same time, there is no reason against supposing that many of his most beautiful love-songs, which carry no internal or external evidence of date, belong to this early period. However that may be, it is not till 1198 that we catch a distinct view of our poet for the first time.

Indeed there is a theory that almost all the naïve and spontaneous lyrics of Walther's minne-period date from this first Vienna life, and that it was the death of the Emperor Henry VI. that first woke the poet out of his dream of love and pleasure, and that aroused in him that noble spirit of patriotism which has made his name so fragrant ever since. Henry VI. had raised the Empire to a position of secure prosperity and dreaded power which it had never reached before; he was still in the flower of his age, and apparently at the opening of a brilliant career. Suddenly he died at Messina, on Sept. 28, 1197, and the earliest political poem of Walther's that we possess evidently marks the tide of feeling at home when the deplorable news was brought to Germany. With his head resting in the palm of his hand, and one knee over the other, and his elbow resting on the upper knee, the poet sits on a rock overlooking the world, and speculates, not without dismay, how fortune, honour, and God's grace are to be reconciled in this bereaved and helmless state. In the next strophe he sees a great water rushing by, with fish in it, and gazing past it he sees the forest: and these fish, and the birds, beasts, yea! and the very worms in the forest, have their order and their rulers, but Germany has none. In the third part he is gifted with prophetic sight, and sees all things done, and hears all things said, by all the men and women in the world, and

behold! they all with one accord lift up their hands to God and cry "Woe! for the Pope is too young! Lord! help thy Christendom." In this first poem of political import we have some of the most characteristic utterances of Walther's muse: desire of order and hatred of anarchy, yearning for the unity of Germany, and deep-rooted suspicion of the Papacy. The mention of the youth of the Pope gives us a hint of the exact date of the poem, since Innocent III. was elected in January 1198, at the unusually early age of thirty-seven.

The death of the great Emperor was coëval with the breaking up of Walther's Viennese home. For some reason obscure to us, Austria was no longer favourable to his prospects. Perhaps the fate of Heinrich had less to do with it than the death of his beloved patron, Duke Friedrich, who was lingering in Palestine at the extreme end of the Third Crusade, and who fell, in April 1198, a few months before his great rival Richard Cœur de Lion defeated the French in the battle of Gisors. It was an epoch of great deeds and names sonorous with romance. While Walther was learning the art of poetry under Reinmar, the terrible Sultan Saladin had died. To return to Vienna: in place of Friedrich, Leopold VII. ascended the Austrian throne, and in him Walther had at first to mourn an irresponsible patron. We possess an artful elegy over Friedrich, in which his successor is warned to imitate the generosity of the duke, but to so little purpose that we find Walther leaving Vienna precipitately, to offer his singing services to Philip, King of Suabia. As Friedrich died in April, and as we find Walther singing at Mayence on occasion of King Philip's coronation in September of the same year, we can hardly allow that he gave Leopold time to do justice to his powers. The poem is very flattering, but from a lyrical point of view particularly flat and inefficient. The excellent and handsome Philip responded, however, to our poet's praise of his magnanimity and his beauty, so far, at least, as to take him with him in 1199 to the Diet of Magdeburg, where Walther gives us a brilliant little picture of the procession of Philip and his Greek queen Irene to church, attended by a gay throng of Thuringian and Saxon nobles. Next year he was back again in Vienna, welcomed this time by Leopold, and rewarded for his songs by largesse from the hands of that young "glorious and liberal" prince. On May 28, 1200, when Leopold took the sword in solemn pomp as Duke of Austria, gifts of "not less than thirty pounds" were made in all directions, and Walther, who had complained in 1198 that the showers of fortune fell on all sides of him but left him dry, was plentifully moistened with golden rain, and had his debts paid. This brings us to the end of his first restless period. From 1200 until 1210 he seems to have stayed quietly in Austria.

The only important event that occurred during this peaceful decade was the death of his great master in poesy, Reinmar the Old. This occurred in 1207. Reinmar, who originally came from Hagenau—that very Hagenau where, in Walther's early manhood, Richard of England

was arraigned before a Diet of the Empire—was *par éminence* the poet of melancholy passion and tender reverie, and very unlike the joyous, manly figure of Walther. There is a tradition that they did not live together on the friendliest terms—a notion that is curiously borne out by the wording of a very musical and thoughtful elegy by the younger on the elder poet, in which he expressly says that it is not Reinmar he mourns, but his art. The death of Reinmar gave occasion to one of the most important contemporary notices of Walther which have come down to us. Gottfried von Strassburg, far away in Alsace, received the news as he was writing the eighth book of his great epic of *Tristan*. He broke off to celebrate and mourn “the nightingale of Hagenau,” and to weave into his narrative a critical sketch of all the great poets of his time. Reinmar has fallen with the banner in his grasp, and the minne-singers are left without a leader. Gottfried takes up his prophecy:—

Who now shall lead our congregation?  
Whose voice guide this dear singing nation?  
I know full well whom ye will find  
Bear best that banner to your mind;  
That Vogelweide it must be  
Whose clear high voice rings merrily  
In fields and in the open air!  
Who sings of wondrous things and fair,  
Whose art is like an organ's tone,  
Whose songs are tuned in Citheron  
To please our goddess Lady of Love.

This testimony, from such a man, proves how far the young poet's fame had already reached, and how highly he was esteemed.

Except that in this same year, 1207, Walther was so frightened by comets and shooting stars that he was sure the Last Judgment was arriving, nothing seems to have occurred in his history until 1210, when we find him in the service of Duke Berhard of Karinthia, where he was so ill at ease that in 1211 he migrated again; and this time to the very home of polite letters, Thuringia, where the young landgrave, Hermann, gathered around him all the most advanced spirits of the age. At the Thuringian court on the Wartburg, close by Eisenach, Albrecht von Halberstadt was busy with his German version of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*; Herbert von Fritslar was composing his epic on the tale of Troy; Heinrich von Veldeke, the greatest of Walther's predecessors, had just died, hard by in Naumburg; and, best of all, Walther learnt here to know the rare and exalted genius of Wolfram von Eschenbach, who was writing his deathless *Parzival*, amid the roaring joviality and hospitable freedom of the Wartburg, of which Walther, whom it suited less, gives a striking picture. This seems to have been a time of depression and morbid irritation with our wandering poet. His bitterest epigrams against Pope Innocent III. date from this period, and the merry life at Eisenach seems to have jarred upon his melancholy. He is

plaintively humorous against a certain knight Gerhard Etze, who has stolen his horse, and on whom he revenges himself by describing him thus,

He rolls his eyes as monkeys do,  
But most he's like the lewd cuckoo,

and other such uncouth pleasantries in the lumbering manner of the middle ages. From Thuringia the dissatisfied man turned to the service of Dietrich Margrave of Meissen, and remained with him till 1213. It is provoking, and a little humiliating, to read the verse-petitions addressed to one monarch after another, praying for protection and shelter, and urging liberality in the style of a charity sermon. Under Dietrich as under Hermann, Walther was a liege servant of the Emperor Otto IV., whose excommunication by the poet's pet aversion, Pope Innocent, provokes him to continual wrath. In all his poems against the Papacy, he writes with a freedom and a force that are truly remarkable, and Luther himself never spoke out more plainly than Walther von der Vogelweide in one little *Spruch* or sonnet, where he urges the division of all temporal and spiritual authority, that being given to God which is God's, and that to the Kaiser which is his. Germany was divided between rival Emperors. Otto IV. was pitted, to the great danger of the whole Hohenstaufen dynasty, against the legitimate heir to the throne, Friedrich, the young son of Henry VI. The civil war between these princes was carried on for ten years, and by-and-by we find Walther growing impatient with his patron, and urging him, at any cost, to endanger the unity of Germany no longer. Presently he describes with enthusiasm the fine presence and masculine beauty of Otto, but pathetically wishes he were as mild as he is tall. Things rapidly get worse and worse, till at last Walther takes up his parable against Otto as a double-faced monster, and openly comes over to the cause of Friedrich. This was but the instinct of a wise rather than grateful man of the world, for the poem we have mentioned last seems to belong to the year 1215, in which Friedrich II. finally gained the day. A series of moving appeals to the clemency of Friedrich meet us next. If only the great man will smile, the poet's genius, now frozen as in winter, will reblossom and revive. He says that—

Then will I sing again of little birds,  
Of heather, and of flowers, as once I sang:  
Of lovely women and their gracious words,  
And cheeks where roses red and lilies sprang.

Vienna seems once more to have become his settled home, and in 1217 we read his farewell to Leopold, who, with the flower of Austrian chivalry, was then starting for Palestine on the fifth Crusade. Their departure leaves the court and city as empty and dull, we are told, as the departure of the knights of the Table Round, when they parted on the quest of the Graal, left Arthur's fabulous city. The public of Walther's day, it must be remembered, were even more familiar than we are with

the Arthurian legends. The humorous tone of this song, however, soon fades in genuine apprehension, and we have a poem in which, in a strain of the tenderest and most child-like piety, he begs God to guard him as Gabriel guarded Jesus in the crib at Bethlehem. To this period belongs a curious lyrical tirade against the roughness of the young knights, who have no care for courtesy and the dignity of women. For such licentious and froward mediæval youth, Walther has but one lesson, and he repeats it incessantly—

And wilt thou gild the round of life, of women speak thou well?

The two years between Leopold's departure and his happy return in 1219 were lightened by brief visits to Styria and Bavaria, but he was back again in Vienna to welcome his prince, and to send a joyous note of congratulation after him when he set out once more, this time to be crowned at Rome in the winter of 1220. It must have been about the same year that he gained the friendship of Englebert, the stirring Prince Archbishop of Cologne, under whose special protection he flourished until 1225, when that gifted prelate was murdered by his own nephew. As time goes by, as the poet grows older, and as one friend and patron is taken from him after the other, he loses gradually the elasticity of intellect that had so long sustained him, and there comes to be something almost querulous in his tone. In cadences that become monotonous, he mourns the disappearance of honour, art, piety and virtue from the land, and it is not always that the sadness is tempered with so much sweetness as in the following poem, which we translate as literally as possible, with the poet's own rhymes and measure. He has been ill all through the winter, and only revives when spring is in the land once more:—

The hoar-frost thrilled the little birds with pain,  
 And so they ceased their singing;  
 But now the year grows beautiful again,  
 Anew the heath is springing.  
 I saw the flowers and grasses strive amain  
 Which should the taller be—  
 I told my lady this sweet history.  
 O how I suffered through the wintry hours  
 And grievous frosty weather!  
 I thought I nevermore should see red flowers  
 Among the dark green heather;  
 Yet, had I died, 'twere grief to friends of ours,  
 Good folk who when I sang  
 So gladly danced about for joy and sprang.  
 Had I been dumb on this delightful day,  
 For me it were great sorrow;  
 And Joy, so smitten, would have fled away,  
 And for no happier morrow  
 Would Joy have said farewell, O well-a-day!  
 May God preserve you all,  
 So that ye pray that health may me befall.

The poet need not much longer detain us from the poems. After the murder of Engelbert the religious tendency of Walther's character seems to have deepened into pietism. It is, therefore, fitting that we meet with him next at the court of Hermann's successor, Ludwig, Landgrave of Thuringia, who, as husband of Saint Elizabeth and patron of the ecclesiastical party, was as fanatic as his predecessor had been dilettante. But Hermann's ring of poets was by this time broken up; one by one they disappear, as is the wont of mediæval poets, fading from our sight with no record of their death. Ludwig was a child of the new age, the characteristic man of the fanatic epoch just commencing. With the year 1226 a sudden accession of pietism was felt throughout Europe; the life-long devotion of St. Francis of Assisi was crowned by his mystical death, and France was at once consolidated and fully reconciled to the Papacy by the accession of a still sweeter because more human saint, St. Louis. The power of the Empire, on the other hand, was visibly shaken. In vain Friedrich, "the world's wonder," had trusted to the power of his individual tact and genius to frustrate the petulant intrigues of Pope after Pope. He was the most brilliant of the Hohenstaufen emperors, but under him the power of the dynasty faded into air. His independence of religious opinion was not shared by the tributary Princes of the Empire, and among the malcontents none was more ardent than this young Landgrave of Thuringia. At the court of Eisenach, in 1226, Walther must have often seen the slight pale figure of the austere girl who ruled the ruler of the Thuringians. Mystical, hysterical, a dreamer of dreams, the wife of the Landgrave Ludwig was among the most singular of the characters of that dramatic age. We know her best as Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, that very saint round whom some of the most charming myths of the middle ages cluster. Not, we may be sure, without strenuous help from her did Walther von der Vogelweide, in 1227, address a burning word of lyrical exhortation to Ludwig to start on a new Crusade, to win back Palestine once more. In all Walther's latest poems we may fairly trace the inspiring influence of personal intercourse with Saint Elizabeth, and the verses which breathe the fullest perfume of her pure devotion are among the deepest and most exalted that he has left. Always a child of his age and a representative man, we see him in the early troubadour times throwing all his force into the courtly cultus of the Lady of Love, in the internecine struggles of the candidates for empire, preaching with a louder, clearer voice than any other the gospel of unity and independence; now in his old age rousing to the new religious fervour, and contributing to its psalmody the crown of spiritual songs. Ludwig obeyed the summons, and started under the banner of the Emperor Friedrich in the autumn of 1227. Two beautiful *Kreuzlieder* of Walther's—crusade-songs that manifestly belong to this pilgrimage—still exist, and from their wording it has been considered that one was composed after the melancholy delay at Otranto, where Ludwig and many others died of the plague, the other in Palestine itself. The present



writer, however, holds with that most careful critic, the late Franz Pfeiffer, that these poems contain nothing that could not as well have been written in Germany as in the Holy Land. One strophe of the first will illustrate the measure and manner of them :—

O God, thy succour send us,  
Thy saving right hand lend us,  
Till all is done befriend us,  
Till all this life is o'er;  
In all our onward stations  
Defend us from temptations:  
We know the hellish nations  
Are round us tempting sore;  
O lead us with this ditty,  
Right on to thy lone city!  
Jerusalem, in pity  
We weep for evermore!

With the departure of the Crusade, Walther's last light seems to have gone out. Sad and weary he turned to his old Tyrolese home, and found all there changed and desolate, after forty years of absence. It was probably then, and sore at heart to find himself forgotten, that the old world-weary poet composed his last and finest poem. The burden of life was never sung with more passionate sorrow; the very rhythm seems to have a wailing echo in it. We have essayed to render part of this exquisite elegy, with as little loss as possible of its naïveté and pathos :—

Woe's me, where are they vanished, my years of life that flew?  
O has my life been but a dream, or has it all been true?  
Was that a lie I cherished, that truth I vaunted so,  
For, lo! it seems I've been asleep, and nothing now I know.

Now have I wakened; all is dim! I cannot understand  
What, ere I slept, was plain to me as is my either hand;  
This folk and land amidst of which my life arose so well,  
Have grown my foes, and all is strange, and why I cannot tell.

My life is bowed with burdens, 'tis more than I can bear;  
The world is full of sorrow and weary with despair;  
And when I think of time long past, of wondrous vanished days,  
Grief takes me like a sudden wave that breaks on ocean-ways.

The very youth that were so gay, how sadly now they fare,  
Their eyes are bowed with wretchedness, their lips are full of care;  
All they can do is mourn and weep; alas! why do they so?  
Where'er I turn in all the world no happy man I know.

Dance, laughter, singing, all forgot and sadly put away,  
No man throughout all Christendom has joy in these to-day;  
Mark how the women little heed the tiring on their head!  
The proudest knights are fain to lie in boorish drowsyhead.

\* \* \* \* \*

O wold that I might leen a shield and take a sword in hand,  
 Would God that I were worthy furd to fight for his dear lard!  
 Then should I, poor albeit I seem, myself a rich man hold,  
 Yet not in acres have my wealth, nor master be of gold.

But I should bear upon my head the light eternal crown  
 That one poor soldier with a spear can conquer for his own;  
 O might I that dear voyage make, and wend across the sea,  
 For ever would I "glory!" cry, and nevermore "Woe's me,"  
 And nevermore "Woe's me!"

Such, or rather far sweeter and more musical than we have art to make it, is Walther's swan-song, and with it he fades out of our sight. The only traditional fact that can help us is, that he retired to an estate near Würzburg, in Franconia, which Friedrich had given him, and that he quietly passed away about 1235, having survived all the rivals and friends of his youth. It is said that he was buried under a linden in a grass-plot surrounded by the cloisters of Würzburg Minster, in a sweet poetic sanctity, shielded from the world, yet open to the sky and a leafy haunt of birds. Out of the great love he had for those his winged rivals of the woods, there arose a charming legend, that has done more than anything else to popularise his memory, to the effect that in his last testament he left a special provision that directed that every day the birds should receive food and drink upon his tombstone, so that the branches of the linden that hung over him should never cease to resound with the voices he had so tenderly loved and so exquisitely imitated. Many poets competed to write his praise when he was dead, but none with such a naïve felicity as Hugo von Trimberg, in his well-known couplet:—

Hêr Walther von der Vogelweide,  
 Swer des vergêz', der tât' mir leide.

"Who thee forgets, does me a wrong!"

It is time now to examine the poems which remain to us of the work of this great man, whose troubled and unhappy life we have traced to its final repose. In the course of the previous narrative we have spoken of the political section of his verses, for it is from these that we have extracted, not without much labour, the greater part of the history of his life. Full of biographical interest as they are, however, they do not form by any means the most attractive or important section of his labour. In treating Walther as a political or as a religious poet, we must not forget that his great claim to remembrance rests, not on the lyrics which he composed in these capacities, but on the matchless *minne-lieder*, love-songs, which were the first-fruits of his youth. In reading these we find ourselves face to face with the earliest blossom of pure chivalry. As might be expected in the lyrical work of a generation that blended the sentiment of *Kudrun* with that of *Parzival*, the Scandinavian toleration of women, born of something like indifference, with the Provençal gal-

lanty, born of poetic passion, the German love-songs of the school that culminated in Walther have a tender elevation, a serene sweetness more courtly than a Northern, less sensuous than the Southern erotic literature.

Friedrich Barbarossa had instituted several Courts of Love in Germany in the middle of the twelfth century, but they had not suited the grave temper of the nation; and while in Provence and France they flourished for a couple of centuries, becoming more and more fantastical and licentious, we hear no more of them in Germany after the death of Barbarossa. French influence on German literature was more epical than lyrical, more through such writers as Chrétien de Troyes than through the troubadours; but the laws of love, as settled by such potentates as the Countess of Champagne and Ermengarde, Lady of Narbonne, were accepted by the whole world of lovers, and are reflected in the simpler poems of the Minne-singers. What strikes us most prominently in the lyrics of Walther, and what gives them that inherent excellence which has kept them fresh after 600 years, is the resolute manner in which, in defiance of the artistic theories of the age, he constantly returns to the study of nature, and the folk-song as an inspired emanation from nature. His verse is full of clear little landscapes, warm with colour and sunlight, like those that fill the backgrounds of the earliest German and Flemish painters. The great fault of mediæval poetry being that it is conventional, mannered, and artificial, the student of that poetry best knows how like a fountain in the desert such a clear trill of song as the following ballad of Walther's seems. There is a versified paraphrase of it by Thomas Beddoes, the author of *Death's Jest Book*; but so inaccurate is it, that we prefer to lay before the reader a translation in literal prose, the intricate harmony of the original measure seeming to defy translation:—

Under the linden  
On the heath,  
There our double bed we made;  
There might you find  
Fair as well as  
Broken flowers and grass.  
In front of the forest in a valley  
Tandaradei!  
Sweetly sang the nightingale.

I wandered  
To the field;  
Thither was my beloved come.  
There was I so taken,—  
Blessed Lady!  
That I shall evermore be happy.  
Did he kiss me? O, a thousand times!  
Tandaradei!  
See how red my mouth is!

There had he made  
 So rich  
 A bed of flowers ;  
 Had any one come by,  
 Inwardly  
 He would have laughed,  
 Since among the roses he might well  
 Tandaradei !  
 Have marked where my head had lain.  
  
 That he was there by my side  
 If any were to know,  
 (God forbid it !) I might be shamed.  
 What there befell  
 No one knows  
 Except he himself and I  
 And one little bird,—  
 Tandaradei !  
 And she may well be trusted.

The innocent sweetness of these lines reaches at one bound the absolute perfection of such writing. In our own rich poetic literature we have equalled, but none could excel its divine simplicity and purity. In Germany it remains without a rival in its own peculiar class, the finest songs of Friedrich Rückert coming closest, perhaps, to it. The genius of the folk-song was never more exquisitely wedded to the art of accomplished verse. Among characteristics that Walther owes to his reverent study of the *folk-lied*, may be mentioned his manner of contemplating the seasons, and their natural phenomena. Spring is his favourite time, and he is divided between the joyous excitement of seeing the flowers break through the snow, delicate reminiscence, perhaps, of the gentians on his own Tyrolese mountain sides ; and the still contentment of May, the month of blossoms, that links spring with summer. He has his flower of flowers ; the heather is to him what the daisy was to Chaucer. His songs are full of references to the tender beauty of the rose-red bells that bud and break out of the dark-green sprays. He is never tired of this one flower ; when he is ill and like to die in winter, it is the sight of the heather in bloom that brings back to him the desire to live. Some of his images give the heather a sweet significance ; in one *minne-lied* he says : "The heather blushes red in spring to see how green the forest is growing, so sorrow is ashamed at sight of joy." But it is not the simple flower of the wilds that can bewitch him in his excitable moments. Then the forest must receive him in its murmurous depths, to wander there till the poet's mood of restlessness is over. "I love the heather with all its manifold colours, but I love the forest better still, for within it there are many wonderful things." But for the winter he spares his hatred. Few men have said more petulant things about the winter-time than Walther. The first line of the first poem in the collected edition of his works reads : "The winter has done us all

manner of harm : heather and forest have both lost their colour, but many a voice will soon sound sweetly there again. As soon as I see the maidens playing at ball in the streets, then I know it is time to hear the birds again. Would that I might sleep away all the hours of winter ! for watching and waiting, I grow angry that its power should spread so far and wide. God knows it must soon give place to May, and then we shall have flowers again where now we have frost." In another early poem he says : "I am grown as uncouth as Esau, my smooth hair has become all rough (with winter cold). Sweet summer, where art thou ? I long to see how the fields lie once more. Rather than go on suffering as I am doing now, I would go and be a monk at Toberlû." Toberlû being, it seems, an excessively bleak and dreary Cistercian monastery in Westphalia. Once only does he speak well of winter. That one good word is to be found in the latest group of his *minne-lieder*, where at last the obdurate lady of his love has rewarded his patient passion with a declaration of her submission. That first winter of bliss cannot be denounced as winters in general are. He blames the days for being so short, but satisfies himself with this true lover's philosophy :—

If the winter days be brief,  
Longer last the winter nights ;  
Loved and lover find relief,  
Rest and bliss in love's delights.

What have I said ? Woe's me ! in silence best  
Such rapture were confessed.

There is one exquisite *Tag-lied*, or *aubade* as the French would call it, song of dawn and awakening, in which the Juliet finds a thousand plausible reasons why her Romeo should take no heed of the day-star that shines out of the grey sky in testimony of the approach of morning. Fresh as dew or a newly opened flower, such poems as these, perfumed with gaiety, chivalry and romance, come down to us with the first principles of love and poesy upon their innocent rhythms. These earliest lisplings of the vernacular are naïve with the simplicity not so much of a child as of some adult creature newly gifted with a voice, some Dryad or Oread just cumbered with humanity. Their sweetness is primitive and unaffected, and we listen to them with surprise to find the things they tell us so familiar and yet so freshly put. The Old High German, too, has a dreamy dignity about it that is lacking in the German of to-day ; there are none of the harsh labial compounds that grate upon the ear, and mar so much of the melody even of Goethe and Heine ; there is none of the garrulous flatness that mars its other child, the otherwise rich and graceful tongue of modern Holland. It is inherently, in all its distinction and its imperfection, the language of romance, as Old French is *par excellence* the language of chivalry.

All this while we have said nothing about the class of his poems for which Walther was most admired by his contemporaries, and in which they took most interest, the *minne-lieder*. Criticism loves above all

things to linger around the peculiarities and individualities of a character, and shrinks from the needful task of considering its uniformities. Minne-singing was the fashion of the time, and of Walther himself we learn least from the love-songs. Yet, considered simply as poetry, and as the culmination of an interesting literature, they are worthy of our careful attention. The relative position of a poet and his mistress, of any knight and his liege lady, was but recently defined by the fantastic laws of chivalry. The elaborate system of gallantry that was instituted in the south of France, and out of which there gradually developed a passion for amorous litigation which was never equalled for frivolity before or since, had not penetrated as far as Germany. We meet with none of the nonsense of *tensons* and *arrêts d'amour* east of the Rhine, and there is an agreeable absence of the attacks upon conjugal duty in sentiment if not in fact which were so familiar to the French courts of love. A simpler, sweeter fashion prevailed among the patrons of the minne-singers, and the new discovery of the lofty worth of woman was pushed to no foolish excess of affectation. It seems to have been customary for every minstrel who felt in himself a calling to sing of love, to choose a mistress to whom to pour out his ardour and his melancholy. Considering the roughness of the times, it is very singular that the ordinary tone of the verses produced should be so reticent, so delicate as it is. These are the words in which Walther first introduces us to the lady of his love:—

“When the flowers are springing out of the grass, laughing up at the wanton sun, in a May morning early, and the little birds are singing in the very best way they can, what can be likened to that? It is well nigh heaven itself. Should we say what it likens, I could have said what I have seen much better, and I would say so still, could I only see that glorious sight again. It was where a noble, beautiful, pure woman, well robed and well adorned, went in company with many folk, with lofty bearing and not alone, looking slowly around her from time to time, going as the sun goeth among the stars. Let May bring us all its wonder, what has it so wonderfully sweet as this her lovely body? We let all the flowers stand waiting, and gaze upon this perfect woman.”

We are forcibly reminded in this beautiful description of Walther's first sight of his mistress, of the passage in the *Vita Nuova*, where Dante sees Beatrice among the other fair Florentine girls, outshining them all. There is a grace in the picture that recalls the slim maidens of some early Tuscan procession, in attendance on a queen who easily surpasses them in dignity and beauty. Presently the first awe of the stricken senses gives way to passion that exalts and excites the imagination, and in the next poem his hands are longing to adorn her. In language at once ardent and reverent, he declares that her simple robes should be set off with chains of jewels, and since he is poor and cannot buy these, he will throw about her garlands of red and white flowers that have sprung in forest depths to the sound of the singing of birds. He flies to the woodlands to get these chaplets for her, and in the leafy solitude he makes bold to



tell us how he declared his love for her to herself. It was underneath a blossoming tree that he told her, and the air so shivered with his passion that the petals were loosed from the boughs and fell in a soft rain at their feet. In his next song he is less rapturous. It is the beauty and goodness of his dear lady that have bewitched him, and her red mouth that laughs so sweetly; and his own diction, as he says so, is so felicitous and bright, that we think of Heine in his few joyous *Lieder*. Presently we learn that some great national disaster has fallen upon Germany; but Walther can hardly refrain from singing, for he is thinking of his mistress. He is like a happy child forced to attend a funeral, who is chided for an involuntary peal of laughter. But a sadder tone comes in, a chord of apprehension jarring on the joyful music. His lady holds aloof, and while permitting him to be her declared servant, will grant him no favour, and pronounce no word of comfort. The rapture gives way to a strain of exquisitely gracious supplication. "If thou art indifferent to me I know not. I love thee! This one thing is hard to bear. Thou lookest past me and over me. I cannot bear this my burden of love alone. If thou wilt only deign to share it, I can easily bear it." There is something extremely genuine and pathetic in this broken cry of hope deferred, and the simple confession that it is very hard to be unable to fix her look a moment, that she will "look past me and over me." We seem suddenly brought face to face, pulse to pulse, with the living man in such a natural ejaculation of wounded love and vanity as this. In the next poem we learn something of the proud lady's station. "*Herzeliebe Frowwelin*," he says, "heart-beloved maiden, many blame me that I love one so poor as thou art and of so low estate. This I bear as I have borne, as I will ever bear; thou art beautiful, and thou art rich enough for me. I would not give the glass ring round thy finger for a queen's gold." The next song lends itself so lightly to our English, that we cannot refrain from giving one stanza in verse:—

God of her face had great delight:  
 He spread such precious colours there,  
 So purely red, so purely white,  
 Here rosy-flashed, there lily-fair:  
 O, I would see her gladder far,—  
 Dared I to say so without sinning,—  
 Than heaven or heaven's bright chariot-star:  
 Poor fool, is this thy praise-beginning?  
 For if I lift my words so high  
 The trespass of my mouth may make my heart to sigh.

Whereupon he melts into a reverie about her lips, so ripely red for kissing, and wonders if he shall ever win them for his own; the whole somewhat unusually amorous strain being accounted for in some measure by the last stanza, in which we learn how he fainted, wounded by her loveliness, as, himself unseen, a wild-wood Actæon, he watched her rising naked from her woodland bath. We also, glancing for a moment,

may in fancy see some such substantial figure, flecked with leaf-shadows, and unabashed, as was made immortal three hundred years afterwards in Albrecht Dürer's glorious engraving of the Adam and Eve, that beatification of the Teutonic Venus.

At this point we meet with the first of those invectives against "my lady Fortune," *Frou Salde*, which become so common. He begins to feel his lack of wealth and his uncertain position very irksome and painful, and he blames Fortune for his ill-luck with his mistress, who in spite of all is still "not dear, or very dear, but the dearest of all." It furthermore appears that the object of his affections is not known to the world; it was a kind of duty with sensitive lovers to conceal their lady's name, and he complains that people flock round him, and tease him to tell them. But he will give way at last, and let them know. This lady, then, has two names—the one of them is Grace, but the other is Churlishness; and so he leaves them as wise as they were before. There follows then a declaration couched in words of the most modern tone and feeling. He tells us that a man of honour, a knight, a gentleman in fact, should respect all women, but should keep his deepest reverence for the best. Not those, necessarily, which have the most beauty, for beauty is but an adornment of goodness; and then, confessing that his mistress treats him ill, yet he cannot regret being a servant of love, for he says that a man knows no more than a child what life means if he never loved a woman. Next we have a charming pastoral vignette. He is sitting in the fields, and meditating on his love; he determines to try the oracle. So he takes a long stalk of knot-grass, and pulls it asunder, joint by joint as children do, to see if she will love him or love him not. He begs us "do not laugh!" for the answer is favourable, and he is so hopeless that even that affords him some little consolation. Presently we find him, in true Renaissance spirit, kneeling in supplication to *Frouwe Minne*, Venus, our Lady of Love, that she will shoot an arrow into the hard heart of his mistress. It is difficult to imagine how it was possible that these long-winded interchanges of homage and disdain, to prosecute which

Men must have had eternal youth,—  
Or nothing else to do,

as Mr. Dobson flippantly but pertinently says, could be pursued without much *ennui*. The sense of the ridiculous was very slightly developed in the early mediæval times, many proofs of which might be adduced from Walther's poems, and from none more than the next we come to among the *minne-lieder*, which we translate as being at the same time very short and a curiosity in subject and metre:—

Queen Fortune throws her gifts around,  
But turns her back on wretched me;  
No place for pity hath she found,  
And what to do I cannot see;

To me to turn she will not deign,  
 And if I run around, I find her turned again.  
 She pleases not to see me ever,  
 I would her eyes stood in her neck, so must she see me then for all her wild  
 endeavour.

The abnormal length of the last line is of not unfrequent occurrence in these poems, and points to some peculiarity in the melody to which they were sung, for in all cases the metre was arranged to suit the tune, not the tune composed for the words.

A fresh group of more humoristic *minne-lieder* opens with a whimsical piece of petulance directed against his lady. All her honour comes from having so great a poet to sing her glory, and if she will not favour him he will sing no more, and her fame will be forgotten. Then with a curious impetuous outburst that is half-comic, half-savage, he hopes that if she refuses him, and takes a young man when she is gray, that her lusty husband may revenge her first poet-lover by ill-treating her, and by whipping her old hide with summer saplings. The next is more fantastic still, full of curses on the winter, queer jokes about the ill-fortune of hearing the ass and the cuckoo on an empty stomach, and ends up by addressing his mistress as Hiltegunde. It has been supposed from this that that was her name; but, on the whole, considering the etiquette of the times, which, as we have seen, forbade a knight to reveal his lady's name, it is more likely that it is a play on his own name in connection with the popular romance of *Walther and Hildegunde*. A little later we are assured that the Emperor, probably poor young Heinrich VI., presently about to die in Sicily, would gladly turn music-maker for a kiss of her red lips. Passing one or two similarly conventional lyrics, we come to one song of a far fresher kind, one that made Walther famous at once, and which ought to endear his name and memory to every German, the first clear note of high patriotic unity, a hymn in praise of Germany and German beauty. One verse in particular has often been quoted by modern critics as curiously anticipating the famous national song, *Was ist das deutsche Vaterland?* of Ernst Moriz Arndt:—

From Elbe river to the Rhine,  
 And back again all round to Hungary,  
 'Tis the best, this land of mine;  
 The best of all the world, it seems to me.  
 If I can judge what's fair,  
 In body or in face,  
 So help me God, no ladies have such grace  
 As German women bear.

Whether this declaration of public feeling softened his Hiltegunde's heart or not, at all events we find him soon on terms of familiarity with her, called by her *frunt* and *geselle* (lover and comrade), and calling her in return *fründin* and *frouwe mîn* (darling and wife). With this song and with that quoted above, in which, for her sake, he forgives the winter, closes the series of *minne-lieder*.

The verses of his later days breathe a spirit of morbid and petulant melancholy that is very sad to meet. He lived long enough to see the decline of art, and to hear the cry that poetry was dead. Walther deplores with much bitterness the loss of courtly popularity. The world whom he has served and still would serve has left him, he tells us, to listen to young fools. The garlands of the world have missed him, and the blossoms faded; the very roses have fallen apart and left only thorns. Virtue has lost its power, beauty its magic, in these sad days. In short, he mourns, like Asaph of old, that the wicked should flourish as a green bay-tree, while he is poor and an outcast. In one of these later poems, however, we come upon a single example of a brighter mood. It begins with the old depression. He is in utter despair; life is not worth living; all men do evil, and that is the fault of the women. So far all is gloomy, but at the mention of the last word he pauses, and reproves himself for speaking evil of women. He has no right to carp at others because life is dark to him, and the piece ends by his saying, "Then I will live as best I may, and give out my song." But he is soon as miserable as ever. Love likes the stalwart limbs of young Four-and-twenty better than the wise bald head of Three-score. The Lady of Love has gone crazed after young fools, and heeds not him nor his songs. Art is at a low ebb, morality is dead, and at last he says farewell to the world altogether.

There is little pleasure in following him through this period of morbid and atrabilious discontent, a Byronic disease of the mind far enough removed from that melancholy of Leopardi or Shelley, which is deeply poetic in spite of its weakness. We lose in it all trace of the joyous singer who had been unable, in his youth, to lead off even a piece of juggling nonsense about a crow and an old woman, without a prelude of such bubbling Chaucerian sweetness as this :—

When summer came to pass,  
And blossoms through the grass  
Were wonderfully springing,  
And all the birds were singing,  
I came through sun and shadow  
Along a mighty meadow,  
In midst of which a fountain sprang,  
Before a woodland wild, that rang  
With songs the nightingale outsang.

We have seen that he awoke from this intellectual paralysis which was creeping over him, under the excitement of the pietistic revival, and wrote some superb fresh sacred lyrics under the personal influence of St. Elizabeth of Hungary. We have seen, too, that the rousing of the embers was but a flash and that the end was near. The life of trouble was to find rest in the cloistered silence of Würzburg. Thus we have traced the man and the poet through his life and his work to the same point of conclusion.

E. W. G.

## Lord Fairland's Secret.

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### CHAPTER I.

By a stroke of fortune my father had procured me an appointment as private secretary to our very mighty relative the Marquis of Fairland, who was a member of Lord Sternmouth's long-lived cabinet.

He was a young man who might have passed for my elder brother, for there was a faint family resemblance between us. He was twenty-seven years old, I twenty-four; but in point of stature, build, and handsomeness—so at least said the women—I had the advantage. Nor am I inclined to concede at starting that he had the better head of the two. He was a cabinet minister because he owned the larger halves of three counties, and because the Premier was his uncle; but he knew little of history, science, politics, or of anything else, though he possessed a happy talent for making a speech at a moment's notice on any conceivable subject. These speeches of his were not instructive to read, but they were good to hear. Lord Fairland's displays of ignorance were so amazingly bold that they staggered even the most erudite of listeners with a misgiving lest his lordship should be in truth better informed than they; and his assurance was so complete, so cold, so politely tenacious, that no amount of contradiction or adverse argument could dislodge him from a point he had once made his own. The fact is, he was a magnate whom the sycophancy of the world had early taught to believe that he could never be in the wrong.

We very soon became friends, perhaps because I was the first young man of about his own age with whom he had ever been intimately acquainted. I had been brought up at Harrow and Oxford, whilst he had been educated at home and abroad by clergymen and dowagers. He was on speaking terms with a host of people, in familiar friendship with none. Of amiable character, and more inclined to say Yes than No when his heart was appealed to, he did many kind things without alluding to them; but he disliked exertion and emotions, and I think I first ingratiated myself with him by saving him an immense amount of trouble in relieving and dismissing importunate persons. He gradually remitted to me not merely the business of conducting his official correspondence, but the charge of treating with his agents concerning the management of his vast estates. I became his factotum, and we lived a snug bachelor existence together in a corner of his huge family mansion in Piccadilly, for Lord Fairland was not married and had no wish to be.

Here I come to the subject about which I have taken up the pen to write.

Lord Sternmouth, who had been Fairland's guardian during his minority, was very anxious that he should marry: first, because marriage is the natural destiny of rich peers; and secondly, because in the event of the Marquis dying childless, his estates would devolve upon collaterals who were the Premier's political opponents, and whom, for other reasons of a private nature, he cordially hated. After casting about him with almost as much care as if he were choosing for a son of his own, he decided that Lady Bertha Snowe, only daughter and heiress of the Duke of Snowdon, was the fittest person to become mistress of Fairland Hall; and he set himself diplomatically, as he thought, to inculcate the same view upon his nephew.

But Lord Fairland was not to be caught. He listened respectfully to all that the Prime Minister had to say on the subject of matrimony, and he admitted that Lady Bertha had few equals for grace and sweetness of temper: only he paid no sort of court to this paragon beyond showing himself invariably courteous, so that the Duke and Lord Sternmouth, who had at first begun to conceive hopes, were fain to see that Lord Fairland either objected to part with his heart or had already parted with it to some lady unknown. The latter was the more credible supposition; and Lord Sternmouth, with that statesmanlike shrewdness which is for ever imputing crafty designs, did me the honour to suspect that I was scheming to wed the Marquis to my sister Mary. How his lordship came to learn that such an insignificant person as I possessed a sister Mary I am unable to conjecture; but when he learned that Mary was betrothed to a country gentleman of no great affluence, his good opinion of myself was enhanced, and he marked it by taking me into semi-confidence.

He did so with the greater readiness from knowing that I was the only person whom Lord Fairland wholly trusted. At one of his ministerial parties he drew me aside, and without much seeming to do so, sounded me about the Marquis's tastes and occupations; then, finding he could elicit little to his purpose, he said with abruptness—

"You should induce your cousin to marry, Fairfax: it's nonsense to remain a bachelor when he has such a property as his."

"I think it's a pity," was my answer.

"It is—it is. If you were next heir to the title it wouldn't so much matter; but I should grudge such estates going into the hands of the Grass-shire Fairfaxes, I do frankly confess."

"I should be very pleased if Lord Fairland would marry," I replied, flattered by the Premier's implied compliment.

"Tell him so, and try to win him to the idea," said Lord Sternmouth, rather anxiously. "He has a very lovable nature; but I suspect I know him less well than you do."

I turned over this request of the Premier's with some thoughtfulness,



and next morning at breakfast proceeded cautiously to discharge what I regarded as a confidential mission. I began by remarking that I had much admired Lady Bertha in a quadrille at Lord Portsmouth's, which was not true, for Lady Bertha happened not to have been present. Fairland allowed me to come to a full stop; then asked laconically—

"If you admire Lady Bertha so much, why don't you make love to her?"

"She is out of my reach," I answered, reddening; for it struck me that he might be jealous, and wished to prove me.

"The Fairfaxes are fit mates for any woman in Christendom," replied the Marquis, stirring his tea. "I suppose your true reason is that you fancy I am smitten in that quarter. Well, I tell you that you would render me a real service by wooing and marrying Lady B——"

"Believe me, I never entertained an idea of the sort," I replied, still thinking I was undergoing a test, but much astonished nevertheless.

"Well, but have you any aversion from marriage?"

"No-o, I don't say that."

"And you are not in love already?"

"Not by any means."

"Then as you feel admiration for Lady Bertha Snowe, pay your court to her from this day," said my lord curtly.

"Admiration does not mean love," I rejoined.

"Love will come by and bye, when you get to know each other," remarked the Marquis. "You are handsome, and a thoroughly good fellow. Any woman would like you; and if the Duke raises any difficulties I will smoothe them away by seeing that you have proper settlements. Then we would seat you in the House of Commons, and in course of time your wife's fortune would make a peer of you."

All this Lord Fairland said in the tone of one accustomed to be obeyed. He looked at me indeed as if I should seriously surprise him by offering further objections to his plans so eminently feasible. He rose, lit a cigarette, and without allowing me time to reply, continued—

"I know Sternmouth has been wanting me to marry Lady Bertha; and to tell you the truth I had some thought of pretending to agree, and of feigning an attachment to the lady, in order that they might all let me alone. I calculated I could have dragged on matters for a year or so in that way, by making believe that I wished to study my future wife's character; but a break must have come at last, and those tricks are not fair, for they may hurt a woman's reputation. I will speak out straightforwardly to Sternmouth, who is a nuisance. I don't see why I should be pestered to marry, and I won't marry—that's the long and short of it. As to Lady Bertha, if you don't take her to wife, somebody else will, and you would be silly not to risk your chance while you may."

So I who had sat down to table with the task of converting my eminent kinsman to marriage, was myself, between two cups of tea, cozened into the idea that I might become the son-in-law of a Duke!

Lord Fairland started for his office in Whitehall, and I went to my study to draft answers to a pile of letters. All through the morning I thought of Lady Bertha's pretty face, graceful manners, and wide domains; but the more I thought the more incomprehensible did it appear to me that the Marquis should feel no ambition to marry the attractive young lady. I have said that women considered me handsomer than my cousin; I might have added, that he was not handsome at all. Of less than middle stature and spare proportions, he had a thin pale face, lank yellowish hair, and eyes of an uncertain colour between grey and blue. Except for the air of patrician pride that sat well upon his face, and certainly marked him out from the vulgar, he would have looked puny and dismal. Among a crowd of noblemen of his own rank he cut no great figure.

By luncheon time I had persuaded myself of two things: in the first place, that if Lady Bertha were not enamoured of lands and coronets, I stood as good a chance of obtaining her hand as Lord Fairland himself had done; and in the second, that if my cousin were not enamoured of her sweet young face, his heart must surely have been bestowed in some quarter that I knew not of. It was no business of mine to find out what quarter, and I should have been content to let my curiosity slumber had not events occurred which obliged me to mix myself up in my cousin's private affairs much against my will.

It was towards evening two days after my conversation with Fairland that I received a note from Lord Sternmouth bidding me call at his private residence *immediately*.

I went, of course, without losing a moment, and found the Premier in considerable agitation. The Duke of Snowdon was with him, and both looked at me with glances in which anxiety and mistrust were mingled.

"Tell me the truth, Fairfax," began the Premier, with a frown on his brow, but an appealing tone in his voice. "Were you aware that Lord Fairland was married?"

"Married!" I exclaimed, and both the noblemen must have seen from my manner how genuine was my amazement.

"Privately married, and under his mere family name of Charles Fairfax, to the widow of a small tradesman in one of the suburbs," continued the Premier, in a tone of disgust, anger, and grief impossible to describe. "You surely must have been aware of his practice of going out to the suburbs in disguise every evening?"

"His wife believes him to be a commercial traveller," put in the Duke of Snowdon, who was a tall portly nobleman, with a venerable face and solemn deportment.

I thought the two peers were either hoaxing me, or had themselves been hoaxed.

"Read these papers," said Lord Sternmouth, impatiently; and he handed me a bundle of documents headed with the address of a private inquiry office.

## CHAPTER II.

THE documents contained a complete record of Lord Fairland's movements during the previous three months, and they proved that he had been watched with no common care. The gist of the report was, that the Marquis went almost daily to visit a young woman who kept a glove and perfumery shop near Paddington, and to whom he had been indubitably married, although she still retained over her shop the name of her first husband, which was Blake. Of this young woman's, or of her first husband's antecedents, nothing appeared to be known. They had come one day to settle in the district, and they seemed to have prospered until the sudden death of George Blake, which occurred in a railway accident about a year (so far as could be ascertained) after their marriage. The inquiry office had been unable to find out where young Blake and his wife had lived before coming to Paddington; all they could learn for certain was that the married life of the young couple had not been a happy one owing to Blake's addiction to drink. The glove-shop was kept going mainly by the industry and economy of Mrs. Blake, and also in some degree by her beauty, which exercised a potent spell in attracting customers. The Blakes had no children; and it was not more than eighteen months after the death of her husband that the young widow had been privately married to Lord Fairland. Her age was stated in the register of the parish where the marriage had been solemnized, to be twenty-three.

I took in all these facts, turning over the papers in the presence of Lord Sternmouth and the Duke, who conversed in low tones all the while. The Duke gradually affected—not over successfully—to treat the subject with indifference; but Lord Sternmouth was very angry, and showed it by vehement exclamations, in which the word “jade,” “adventuress,” &c., often recurred. I shall never forget his look when he turned towards me, after I had finished the papers and had laid them on the table.

“Well, what do you say to that?—it's a pretty business!”

“I am greatly surprised, my lord,” I answered, feeling that I had grown pale.

He made an impatient gesture, as if I were employing a term of foolish weakness under such circumstances.

“You assure me again on your word of honour that you had not the faintest suspicion of these things?”

“I give you my word that I had none.”

“Now collect yourself and reflect whether you can call to mind any facts that ought to have aroused your suspicions?”

I collected myself, but could call to mind nothing. I replied that Lord Fairland and I were but little together after noon. He had his ministerial and parliamentary duties to attend to, and I supposed that

in the evenings he went into society. It had never occurred to me to wonder how he spent his time. Questioned as to whether I had any reason to believe that Lord Fairland's valet was in his master's confidence, I declined to answer, for I resented the part of espionage which it was being sought to thrust on me. Lord Sternmouth understood and stammered an apology, and at the same time he implied by a nod that he would not trouble me further. Just as I was moving towards the door, however, he called me back.

"Not a word of this to Lord Fairland, please. He has been made the dupe of an artful scheme, but you must leave his grace and me to deal with the matter. Any interference of yours might produce mischief."

I was greatly relieved at being charged to hold my tongue. It is ill work meddling between people in love; and I knew Fairland well enough to feel that at the first sign of any interference on my part with his affairs he would dismiss me from his service, a consummation which I dreaded on many grounds, not the least of which was that I liked him. Lord Sternmouth shook hands with me as I took leave of him, and the Duke bowed to me with that excess of politeness which great nobles so well know how to assume to keep inferiors at a distance. He did not look as if he would ever take kindly to the notion of having me for a son-in-law.

I left Downing Street much engrossed by the secret which had just been entrusted to me. It astonished me greatly that a man so haughty, so imbued with nobiliary instincts and prejudices as Fairland should have contracted a *mésalliance* so debasing. Yet I could not blame him for it, as there was evidently a great passion at the bottom of this affair. I felt anxious to shield him from the probable consequences of his marriage, for I foresaw that Lord Sternmouth meant to try and bring troubles upon him, or at least on his wife. There had been something very stern, very menacing in the old nobleman's allusion to the "scheming adventuress," and his manner had been even more threatening than his tone. But after all I did not well see what he could do beyond compelling Fairland to resign his seat in the Cabinet. A marriage cannot be broken off like a *liaison*, and unless there had been anything irregular in Fairland's nuptials, he and his wife must remain united till death parted them. Perhaps Lord Sternmouth did hope to discover an irregularity in the marriage; but what of that if Fairland, on finding his first marriage annulled, were to contract a second more openly and lawfully? Here I began to wonder whether Lord Fairland's wife—or Amy Fairfax, to give her her rightful name—were in the secret of her husband's rank, or were conniving with him, for private reasons, to keep up the mystery. This speculation proved so interesting that it served to keep me cogitating until I reached St. James's Street.

It was a beautiful summer evening, clear and cool. A sudden impulse seized me to pay a visit to Mrs. Fairfax's shop, and before rea-

soning on the advisability of this course I had hailed a hansom. My first idea was simply to pass by the shop and perhaps peep through the panes, my second-born of curiosity, was to enter and buy something. I had no fear of meeting Fairland, for I supposed that he took his precautions against chance encounters with acquaintances. He was one of the best-known men in town. His portrait was in the windows of all the photograph vendors, and anyone who had met him in the shop must have almost instantly recognised him. Under the circumstances it was probable that he never set foot in the shop, but had access to the house through some private entrance. At the worst, however, a meeting with Fairland would prove nothing that could excite his suspicions. My cousin did not know what friends I had, and I could easily pretend to have received an invitation to a suburban party, and to have stopped by a mere hazard at this particular glove-shop. The truth of my explanation would be borne out by the fact that I was in evening clothes. A half hour's drive brought me to one of those new provincial-looking streets which abound on the skirts of London. All the houses in it were small, and were presumably tenanted by persons in the position of city clerks. The shops in the street were few, and for the most part plain and of cheap appearance, like those in second-rate country towns; but among them one shop shone conspicuously, by reason of its blaze of gas and truly luxurious fittings. It was that of Lord Fairland's wife, for the name of "Blake" glittered over the door in letters richly gilt.

Of the hundreds of persons who passed by this shop daily ninety per cent. must have marvelled why a tradesman who could furnish his house so gorgeously did not remove to a more promising locality. The shop fascinated the eye, and would not have disgraced the showiest thoroughfare of a large capital. Dismissing my cab some doors off, I walked twice up and down the pavement before entering, and each time threw a glance through the plate-glass of the door. The interior was adorned with that quiet, tasteful luxury for which Parisian shops are remarkable. All was ebony, violet velvet and dead gold, and some rare flowers—whether hot-house plants or waxen imitations I could not tell from outside—served to set off by their brilliant colours the rich simplicity of the surroundings. Behind the counter sat a young woman, seemingly no more than twenty years old and of striking beauty, reading.

I turned the large ivory handle of the door and walked in. Almost before Mrs. Fairfax—for I divined it must be she—had risen I detected by her manners that she must have been in a state superior to that she was now filling, and the first words she spoke confirmed that impression. She had that tranquil and graceful bearing which can only come of the education that makes a lady.

"My size is seven and three-quarters," I remarked, after asking for a pair of white gloves.

"I am afraid this quality will hardly suit you, sir," she answered in a musical voice, as she opened a box. "Our stock of the best French

quality is exhausted, but we are expecting some more this very evening. Could you wait?"

"How long?"

"Not more than an hour in any case, but perhaps much less. Mr. Blake may be in at any moment, and he is to bring the gloves."

I presumed that Mr. Blake and Lord Fairland were one; and I was secretly thankful to the Marquis for continuing to bear commercially the name of his wife's first husband sooner than introduce our own family name of Fairfax into the glove-trade. Being very desirous to enter into conversation with "Mrs. Fairfax," I accepted her proposal to wait, and, whilst pretending to try on some morning gloves, chatted with her and examined her.

She was more than pretty: her beauty was of the fresh, radiant kind which attracts the coldest hearts. Rather below women's ordinary stature, all her limbs deserved the epithet of *petite*. Her hands were tiny and faultless, her waist such as a necklace would have clasped, and her figure symmetry itself. But it was difficult in a first interview to take note of all these perfections, so irresistably did her sweet face keep the spectator's gaze spell-bound. She had hair of raven blackness, large dark blue eyes that opened with an expression of astonishing candour, a mouth so small that a cherry could scarcely have entered it whole, and red lips, full of life, which parted as she spoke with a smile of delicious softness. Any court of nobles sitting in judgment on Lord Fairland for having married out of his caste, would have absolved him at sight of this bewitching young creature in whom all was comeliness, gentleness, and womanly grace. I had seen many beautiful peeresses, but none who by right of personal charms better deserved to bear a marchioness's coronet than this little glove-seller, so becomingly yet simply attired in her dress of black silk, with plain white collars and cuffs.

"This is a very pretty shop you have here," I observed, as she was stretching a pair of dogskins for me.

"Everybody tells us so," she replied, smiling, "and it seems to attract customers, for we have often more than we can satisfy."

A foreigner would have asked whether she were so sure it was the shop that attracted customers, but an Englishman dare not venture on such liberties. So I proceeded with observations purely commercial.

"Such a shop would be a great boon in the club district, and I should think it would pay you to move there."

"I should like it above all things," she said with a little sigh, "but Mr. Blake will not consent to it. He has a fancy for this neighbourhood."

"Perhaps he will some day change his mind?"

"I am afraid not, or else he would have done so before now. I was teasing him on the subject only yesterday."

Here there was the tinkling of a bell in the direction of the back parlour. Mrs. Fairfax withdrew with an apology, and almost immediately returned with a box of gloves of the quality I desired, and which, said



she, Mr. Blake had just brought home. From the foregoing facts I had been enabled to glean two things: first, that Lord Fairland had some private entrance into the house; and second, that his wife had no suspicion as to his identity. Her sigh of regret in speaking of Mr. Blake's obstinate fancy for Paddington precluded the idea that she could be aware who Mr. Blake really was; but to make more sure of this last point I tried a bold stroke by requesting that a parcel of gloves should be sent to my address:

"Mr. Frank Fairfax, Fairland House, Piccadilly," I said, in the quietest tone possible, as I lowered my glance to button my glove.

She gave a slight start, almost imperceptible, but it was no more than the start natural to a person who meets with a namesake. Then, quickly recovering, she wrote down my address with the utmost composure in her ledger.

"The parcel shall be delivered at your house this evening, sir," she said, and handed me my change.

But, just as I was taking the money, she started again, and this time looked at me hard. Her liquid eyes were fixed upon me with an expression of amazed wonder amounting almost to dread; and I had only to glance at the mirror opposite me to understand the reason. I have said that between Fairland and myself there were many traits of family resemblance; and there were times when we resembled each other more than at others. For instance, we both wore our hats in the same style (slightly over our eyes), and when wearing overcoats had the same trick of burying our hands in our pockets with a nervous contraction of the shoulders as if we felt chilly. It struck me as I looked into the mirror that it reflected exactly the face and figure of Lord Fairland, *alias* Mr. Fairfax or Blake.

I hastily left the shop, for I felt I had committed a blunder. And indeed I had, for, turning round as I reached the end of the street, I saw that the little glove-woman had come out into the doorway, and was gazing wistfully after me.

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### CHAPTER III.

THERE was something extremely humorous in the notion of a grandee like the Marquis of Fairland leaving the government of an empire to carry gloves to a shop in Paddington. He was so uncommonly truculent in dealing with his peers that I should have liked to see him slink into the back entrance of his clandestine home and undergo a scolding from his pretty wife, because he had brought too many "sixes" and not enough "eights." How he must have loved the woman to put himself thus out of his haughty way for her sake, or, taking another view of the case, what a fund of eccentricity there must have been in the man to impel him thus to live his strange double life. Perhaps he was at heart weary

to sickness of his wealth and rank, and regarded it as a recreation to put on the disguise of a tradesman. To a man of philosophical mind there would certainly have been something amusing in the comparisons between the two spheres of society in which he moved alternately.

I for my part felt no inclination to laugh at Fairland, for I was seriously uneasy at the possible results of what I had done. It was to be presumed that Fairland would instantly learn from his wife that I had been at the glove-shop, and would on meeting me at breakfast sound me as to my motives for going there. This is in effect what occurred. The Marquis came down to breakfast with a shade of anxiety on his face, and was at pains to conceal his impatience to interrogate me. We got through the usual weather and business preliminaries, however, and were seated at table before he said :

"I dropped in at the Opera last night, but didn't see you. I thought you never missed a subscription night?"

"I had to go to a party yesterday out Paddington way. One of my old tutors had invited me."

"Rather slow, I should think."

"Tea and music—as slow as you please; but I made a discovery in those latitudes. In the West Drayton Road there is a glove-shop, unique in its way."

Lord Fairland broke the shell of his egg; I did the same, and endeavoured to speak in my ordinary tone. But there is no conceiving the difficulty of playing parts like this. It seemed to me as though all the muscles of my face were wringing up, and as though my voice were cavernous. Luckily Fairland looked at his egg and not at me.

"Unique—how do you mean?"

"First, in its fittings; but secondly and chiefly, in the beauty of the glove-seller—one of the sweetest faces I have ever seen."

"You seem to be an admirer of sweet faces," remarked the Marquis, drily. "The other day it was Lady Bertha Snowe; now it's—how do you call your new flame?"

"Blake was the name over the door."

"You have already learned it by heart I see."

"It is not such a long one."

"I fancy I saw the name of 'Blake' on a parcel that was lying on the hall table when I came in this morning?"

"Yes, I ordered two dozen pairs of gloves."

"Aha! West Drayton Road will have your custom for the future, I suppose!"

"No, the lady appears to be married, and West Drayton Road is too far afield to go for an entanglement."

Fairland laughed. I had succeeded in playing my part naturally; and his own self-possession was perfect. I took a minute to observe him furtively, and not the vestige of a frown testified to his feeling any uneasiness. His hand did not tremble, nor did his eye wander. He simply

changed the subject, and discoursed in his usual high-and-dry style on the topics of the hour; seeming to be harassed by—amongst other things—some questions which he had to answer in the House of Lords on matters touching his department.

Directing me to hunt up some notes on these questions, he left me with an appointment to meet him at the House of Lords at four, and we each went our ways. Nothing eventful occurred during the remainder of the day. At four Fairland was wearing his habitual face; and he was in as complete possession of himself as ever, for it took him no more than ten minutes to master the notes which had occupied me two hours to prepare, and to deliver by help of them a crisp business-like speech of half an hour. I had entered the House to hear this speech, and was just leaving their lordships' bar when I felt a touch on the shoulder, and saw Lord Sternmouth. He did not speak to me till we were in the lobbies, but as soon as we were out of ear-shot he said confidentially—

"What do you think of that speech?"

"A very able one, my lord."

"Ay, and can you think with patience of a promising statesman like the Marquis having his career smashed by an adventuress?"

"I think your lordship should see the lady," I answered, with as much firmness as respect would permit. "I went to the West Drayton Road yesterday."

"Ah! you have already been there?"

"Yes, and after what I saw I cannot be surprised that Lord Fairland should have conceived the strongest attachment for the lady whom he has privately married. So much beauty and grace are rarely found."

"Moonshine!" interrupted the Premier, testily. "A pretty pair of eyes and a cozening voice.—You young men are all alike. I tell you *that* marriage is a criminal blunder, and must, if possible, be unmade; nothing but disgrace and misery can result from it."

"If your lordship will allow me to express an opinion, I would rather suggest that the marriage should be openly acknowledged," was my deferential reply. "Lady Fairland is evidently a gentlewoman by training, and no harm could result to any man from having her as a life's companion."

"Pshaw, boy, you are talking like a fool," broke out Lord Sternmouth, with contemptuous irritation. "Leave me to manage matters as I think proper, and above all hold your tongue."

I bowed my head under the reproof; though I did not at all like the implied menace of the Premier's words. A hard old statesman, dead to all tender sentiments, but imbued to the marrow with instincts of personal and caste ambition, he was just the man to do something at once crafty and violent to prevent his nephew from throwing his coronet and fortune into the lap of a tradeswoman. A presentiment as of coming

evil seized me, and I could not shake it off, so I went to dine at my club, and repaired afterwards to a ball at the Duke of Snowdon's. Here I found means to dismiss my cares during a few hours, for I contrived to get introduced to Lady Bertha and danced a quadrille with her. But I could not obtain the favour of a waltz, and consequently could not push my court far enough to carry away a little hope with me. I had no sooner left Snowdon House than my anxieties about Fairland re-seized me. Reason as I would with myself that Lord Sternmouth could not, for all his power, do anything to annul Fairland's marriage in the latter's despite, I was yet afraid, and had the greatest difficulty in composing myself to sleep. Dawn was breaking when I at last dozed off exhausted by vain conjectures.

How long I had slept I do not know, but it was broad morning when I was aroused by a not gentle shake of the shoulder, and saw Fairland standing by my bedside. He was very pale, and spoke to me loud and sharply to set me well awake.

"Listen to me, Frank, you are going to tell me the truth. You are awake, are you not?"

"Yes. What's the matter?" I asked, sitting up and rubbing my eyes.

"What have you done with that young person whom you admired at the glove-shop the day before yesterday?" asked the Marquis, looking with indignant fixity into my eyes.

"Done?" I echoed. "I have done nothing? What do you mean?"

"I mean that the lady in question has disappeared, and I have reason to suspect that you wiled her away!"

"Good God, Fairland!" I exclaimed in consternation. "Do not let us have such reticences as this. Do you think me capable of decoying your wife or her of following me?"

"My wife?" repeated Fairland, with strange calmness. "Then you are aware of my being married?"

"I know everything," I rejoined excitedly. "Two days ago I was put into possession of the facts by Lord Sternmouth, and if Lady Fairland has disappeared she must have been kidnapped by his orders. I had a presentiment that something of this sort would happen."

"Then why did you not warn me?" inquired my cousin, and again his voice and manner were wonderfully cool.

"I had given my word to Lord Sternmouth," was my dismayed reply, "and, after all, my better reason rejected the idea that anything of a treacherous nature could be plotted against you. I bitterly repent now having pledged myself to secrecy."

"Compose yourself, and tell me all you know," said Lord Fairland, sitting down; and he astonished me by asking leave to light a cigar.

I related everything I knew—the interview with Lord Sternmouth and the Duke of Snowdon, the report of the inquiry office, my own visit of curiosity to the glove-shop, and the Premier's words to me in the

House of Lords' lobbies. Lord Fairland anxiously listened, and occasionally nodded his head, but gave no other sign of emotion. For a man whose wife had mysteriously disappeared, his attitude certainly exceeded in collectedness anything I should have conceived possible. He continued to puff at his cigar without haste or flurry, and when I had finished, affectionately gave me his hand.

"I daresay there is not much harm done. I will go and call on Sternmouth," he said, and with these words left me. A few minutes afterwards I heard the wheels of his brougham clattering away down Piccadilly.

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CHAPTER IV.

NEEDLESS to say that I hurriedly dressed so as to be ready to assist my cousin in case he should require my services. But two hours passed, and Fairland did not return. I was growing anxious, when, glancing into the paper, I saw the reason of his absence explained. Lord Sternmouth had left for Osborne on the previous night, and it was obvious that the Marquis had gone after him. Admitting the utmost speed in travelling, he could not be back from the Isle of Wight until evening.

What should I do with myself in the interval! spend the whole day without making any efforts of my own to discover Lady Fairland? This was impossible. Apart from affection which I felt for my cousin, I had been too powerfully interested by the loveliness of his wife not to feel moved to do my utmost towards ascertaining whether any evil had befallen her. Fairland's real or affected security I could not share. He perhaps argued with himself that there was no great danger of Lord Sternmouth's mixing in foul play, but I was not at all so sure of that. The Premier would, of course, deny all complicity in the disappearance, and how could he be brought to book? Through subordinate agents a powerful minister has countless methods of putting objectionable people in humble rank out of his path; and Lady Fairland might at this moment be on her way to some continental asylum or convent where it might be almost impossible to discover her. I dismissed the notion that any blacker outrage than this might be attempted on her: yet my faith in the scruples of statecraft was not so strong, but that I recalled with a shudder instances of persons who, after mysteriously disappearing, had been found as mysteriously drowned.

Under all circumstances, as I had no data on which to seek information of the police, I determined on going to West Drayton Road, where I should be able to pick up some certain knowledge of what had occurred and perhaps get some clue. An extraordinary emotion filled me as I started, and my heart beat faster and faster as I neared Paddington. It was evident that Lady Fairland had left on me an impression deeper than I was conscious of, and the consciousness of which when it began to dawn on me filled me with a great dread. Could it be that I

wished my cousin was not married, or if he had a wife it might have been any woman in the world but this one?

Not wishing to have any witnesses of the sensations I might experience on alighting before the shop where I had seen Lady Fairland but a short while ago so serene and happy, I directed the coachman to pull up at the corner of the street. He did so; but I was obliged to take a couple of turns down a byroad before I could man myself to proceed to my destination. My surprise may be conceived, however, when on entering the West Drayton Road I observed not only that "Blake's" shop was open as usual, but that "Mrs. Blake" was sitting behind her counter as if nothing had happened. She was even laughing as she related something to a man who was buying gloves of her, and who seemed so intimate with her that I instinctively hated him.

My entry caused her to look up and make an impulsive gesture as if to hold out her hand to me. I took her hand and pressed it, and in spite of her assumed gaiety she was pale and had evidently been crying. The gentleman who had bought the gloves took up his change, lifted his hat, and retired.

"Thank Heaven, you are safe!" I faltered to Lady Fairland, unable to take my eyes off her.

"You have heard what has happened to me then?" she exclaimed, gazing at me with deep curiosity.

"I heard you had disappeared, and I feared some misfortune."

"You know Mr. Blake then?"

"Yes, I know him."

"His name is Fairfax though, not Blake," she resumed with a wondering intonation; "and yours is Fairfax too, and you are so like each other, you must be relatives."

"We are distant relatives," I stammered, perceiving that Lady Fairland was not yet completely on the track of her husband's identity, and dreading to commit myself. "But tell me please what happened to you."

"Oh, it's a most curious story," she exclaimed, sinking into a seat and putting her hands before her eyes, yet laughing a little as if there were some amusing recollections in her adventure. "Just fancy that I had to go out yesterday afternoon to buy some things, and I was walking through the streets not suspecting anything, when a man came up to me with a note, saying he had followed me, and that Mr. Fairfax had fallen ill, and that I was to return to the shop at once. A cab was passing at the moment, and I summoned it: the man who had brought the note and another who was with him jumped in, and I suppose now that the cabman must have been a confederate, for he backed his horse and galloped away in a direction quite contrary to that which we ought to have taken. Beginning to be afraid, I tried to scream, but a handkerchief, steeped in chloroform I presume, was put to my mouth, and then I remember no more till I found myself in a room somewhere alone with these two men.



They were very kind to me in trying to allay my alarms; but as soon as I was fairly restored, they put to me all sorts of questions under the impression that I was Lord Fairfax's wife. When I had told them that I was not married——"

"What! you are not married?" I exclaimed starting back, so unexpected was this confession.

"No. I am not Mr. Fairfax's wife. My name is Ada Mildmay," she answered innocently. And when I had told them that, and proved it to them by answering their hundreds of questions, their arms seemed to drop from wonder. They muttered something about having bagged the wrong bird, and put me again into a cab which brought me here."

"And you suffered no hurt at their hands?" I inquired, eagerly.

"Oh, none whatever," she answered, with a gust of merriment. "They offered me wine and sandwiches, which I refused of course, and they had the civility to pay my cab home for me. But now tell me, please, what is the meaning of all this, for I suspect you know more about it than you care to say."

"I know nothing, I assure you."

"Oh yes, yes, you do. To begin, what is the meaning of your calling yourself Fairfax too, and of all this occurring to me on the day after I had seen you for the first time? There is a coincidence in that you can't but own."

There was an admirable pout on her pretty lips as she put this pointed question; and I could only answer it by flying. I feared to let out more than I ought to do. How enter into explanations without betraying Fairland? I muttered something about replying to her some other day, and precipitately left the shop. This time I did not turn round to see whether she was gazing after me. I ran straight on till I met a cab, into which I forthwith jumped, telling the driver to take me to Piccadilly.

I cannot tell of what I thought as I sped along. All my ideas were confused, and I could only keep my mind on this one point, that Ada Mildmay was unmarried, and that there was some mystery enshrouding my cousin which I could not venture to penetrate alone. It was misery to me to think that I should have to wait till evening for a settlement of all the doubts and anxieties which were oppressing me; but of one thing I was resolved—namely, that if Fairland was not back from Osborne by six o'clock I would follow him thither. Meanwhile it occurred to me that it would be a prudent thing to send a telegram to my cousin, and I alighted at the nearest office for the purpose. The message which I sent consisted only of these words:—

*"She is found, and is safe and well, at West-Drayton Road."*

The telegram clerk having informed me that the message would reach its destination in half an hour, I had put one load off my mind. Still I was nervous as to what might result from an angry interview on Lord

Fairland's part with Lord Sternmouth; and it was consequently an immense relief when on debouching into Piccadilly I was crossed by the Premier's very brougham, going at a pelting trot toward's his Lordship's private residence. This was a truly fortunate rencontre. I saw Lord Sternmouth in the carriage with his venerable grey head bent over some despatches; and it was clear that he had either not been to Osborne as the newspaper had announced, or had returned very promptly thence. I ordered the cab to turn and follow the brougham, and as Lord Sternmouth was alighting at his house, I ran forward and accosted him, raising my hat.

"Lord [Sternmouth, the Marquis followed you to Osborne this morning, wanting very much to see you."

"Ah, indeed. I only went to Osborne to take her Majesty's orders, and remained there about a couple of hours; Lord Fairland and I must have crossed each other," answered the Prime Minister, with studied affability. "Do you know what the Marquis desired of me?"

"He wanted to speak to you about the mysterious disappearance of the lady whom your lordship erroneously supposed to be his wife."

"Erroneously supposed? I never supposed anything, Fairfax. What are you dreaming about?"

"Why, did not your lordship speak to me yesterday again about Lord Fairfax's clandestine marriage?"

"I do not remember to have ever opened my lips on such a subject," rejoined the Prime Minister, with astounding effrontery and politeness.

I was for a moment dumbfounded, but not liking to be made a zany of, I plucked up my spirit, as I answered with rising anger—

"Your lordship has surely not forgotten addressing me about Lord Fairland's supposed marriage with a glove-seller, and making threatening remarks on the matter?"

Something in my tone probably showed the Premier that it would be inexpedient to trifle with me. He smiled and slightly shrugged his shoulders.

"That inquiry office led us all astray. It was not a marriage, but a connection; and with that neither you nor I nor anybody else have anything to do, Fairfax. Lord Fairland is his own master."

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#### CHAPTER V.

THESE words of Lord Sternmouth's made my heart turn to ice. His manner of uttering them spoke volumes, and the truth seemed to go through me as a flash that this pretty glove-seller, Ada Mildmay—or Blake, or whatever else was her name—was simply living under Lord Fairland's "protection." I called to mind Lord Fairland's unconcern that morning. His jaunty, almost flippant, composure as he smoked his

cigar, and the unconcerned style in which he had set off in quest of Lord Sternmouth. All this pointed to a *liaison*, and what is more, to a *liaison* of which one of the parties was beginning to tire.

And yet no! Any one who had once fallen under the thralldom of those sweet eyes would remain their slave for ever. And they were eyes full of *innocency*—not those of one who had fallen from woman's high estate of chasteness and modesty. I was ready to admit a mystery, however improbable, but I could not admit that Ada Mildmay was otherwise than irreproachable. The artless laugh which had pealed from her lips as she related her adventure to me rang in my ears, and dispelled all the miserable notions which Lord Sternmouth, with his sneer of worldly scepticism, had conjured up.

I returned to Fairland House and shut myself up in the study, resolving that work was the best cure for care, and that I would toil away at answering official letters till the Marquis came back. But, alas, a busy pen must be guided by an undisturbed mind. Again and again the pen fell from my hands and I was listlessly tracing figures in the blotting-book, when towards evening a footman knocked at the door, and announced to me that a Miss Mildmay craved a few moments' interview. Before I could answer, Ada's figure had brightened the threshold, and I ran forward to meet her.

"I came to you about the gloves you brought yesterday, sir," she began, faltering: but at once throwing away this pretence, she added—"No, Mr. Fairfax, please tell me the truth about all these things which I cannot understand. I have been looking into the 'Peerage' this morning at the name of 'Fairland,' and I find the Marquis's name is Fairfax. Is it you who are Lord Fairland?"

I shook my head.

"Then it's the gentleman whom we know as Mr. Fairfax? Tell me the truth—I beseech you tell me the truth—if you like I will swear never to disclose the secret."

Why should I have deceived her? I confessed the truth, and she at once burst into tears, clasping her hands and rocking to and fro. "Oh, how noble and great and good he is! I could not have believed such goodness possible! I could not have thought that any human being could have given proof of such magnanimity, and generosity, and fondness as he has evinced towards us."

"Do you mean Lord Fairland!" I inquired, considerably moved.

"Yes; Lord Fairland's my sister's husband," she answered, as her tears continued to flow.

There was a long pause. Lord Fairland was married then, but not to Ada, and Lord Sternmouth's expressions on Ada were calumnies. I felt too grateful—my heart bounded too high—to leave me any power during the next few moments to ask questions. But when I could speak without faltering I requested Ada Mildmay to furnish me with some explanation as to what she had just said, and she readily did so.

"My sister Amy and I are daughters of a clergyman," she said, drying her eyes; "we are twins, and used to be so like each other that it was impossible to discern between us. Well, some years ago papa died, and Amy soon afterwards fell in love with a gentleman who represented himself to be an officer, but who turned out to have no means of livelihood at all. Amy only found out that after their marriage, and with some little money that she had inherited from papa she suggested that they should set up a glove-shop. This was done, but George Blake, Amy's husband, was a terrible drinker, and gradually fell into such courses that, had he lived longer, it would have been necessary to restrain him. He was killed, however, in a railway accident, and in that same accident Amy lost her eyesight and her beauty. For a time she also lost her reason, and the doctors feared she might never recover."

"But that does not explain Lord Fairland's marriage with her," I remarked.

"Oh yes it does," answered Ada. "Listen to me, and you will see how it all occurred. Some time before that railway accident, Lord Fairland—who called himself simple Mr. Fairfax—came by hazard into the shop to buy gloves, and fell at once into love with Amy, who stood behind the counter then, as I do now. Amy, of course, couldn't listen to him; but she secretly loved him, and the grief that chiefly unsettled her reason when the accident occurred was, I fancy, that she thought Mr. Fairfax would cease to love her because her beauty was gone. He behaved grandly, however; for though she had just passed through one fit of insanity and was threatened with soon having another, he married her in the lucid interval, and I believe now that his only reason for concealing his high rank was that he thought Amy might refuse his sacrifice, if she knew who he really was. He described himself as a commercial traveller."

"A nobleman indeed!" I murmured.

"Isn't he?" cried Ada. "And you should have seen his tenderness towards Amy. Oh, how it all comes back to me now! Amy, being blind you know, keeps in an upper room over the shop; but Mr. Fairfax used to come to spend at least three hours every day with her, and a gentler, kinder being never existed."

"But is there no hope of Lady Fairland's reason and sight being restored to her?" I inquired.

"Her reason is restored to her completely," reiterated Ada; "and as to her sight, the doctor says she will soon regain that too. She already sees through a film."

It was just at this moment, as Ada was still speaking, that there was a ring at the front-door bell, and Lord Fairland's tread resounded through the hall. He came straight to the study, opened the door, and exclaimed, without much surprise, "Well, Ada, so you've found out everything?"

"Oh, Lord Fairland!" she exclaimed, rushing into his arms and

kissing him with a fervour of sisterly admiration, "I ought to have guessed all along that you were not what you pretended yourself to be!"

"Thanks; but that's a clumsy compliment, dear," laughed the Marquis, shaking his head and knitting his brow. "At any rate, don't call me Lord Fairland again. I like my old name of Charles."

He turned as he said this, and held out his hand: "Pray, Frank, oblige me by going to Lord Sternmouth's, and saying I shall call on him in the course of an hour. I want to introduce somebody to him."

His tone was so mild as he said this that I no longer dreaded the possibility of a quarrel between him and the Prime Minister. I repaired at once to Lord Sternmouth's, casting, as I departed, a valedictory look at Ada (who blushed), and found the Prime Minister in company with several other great noblemen, who were presumably going to dine with him. He seemed surprised at my communication; and was apparently about to solicit more detailed explanations, when Lord Fairland, who had followed me almost step for step in his carriage, arrived, and the usher wonderingly brought up the announcement of his visit in the following terms:—

"The Marquis and Marchioness of Fairland."

With intense curiosity all eyes turned towards the door, through which Lord Fairland entered, escorting a veiled lady, who leaned on his arm. She wore a shade over her eyes, and the veil of her face was invisible; but the looks of proud tenderness which Lord Fairland bent on her was such as a woman of the most peerless beauty would have envied.

He advanced into the middle of the room, and, with a gesture at once quiet and manly, said:—

"My Lords—Lady Fairland, my wife!"

I have only to add, that Fairland and I are now brothers-in-law, for I married Ada.

## Thoughts suggested by the Mass in B Minor of Sebastian Bach.

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THE recent performance of Sebastian Bach's great Mass in B Minor has suggested to me the possibility of writing a few pages in the CORNHILL MAGAZINE concerning his music, which may not be utterly unreadable by the great majority of its readers. As a rule, nothing can be more tedious and unmeaning than disquisitions on musical compositions and performances to those who are not of the musical multitude.

For how shall we describe the undescribable? How can we get beyond the mere expression of liking or disliking, in addition to a few technical details, when we write about a new musical composition? How could we convey to the mind of a man any conception of the positive quality of a sweet scent when the reality has never reached his nostrils? Can we put into words the difference between the odours of mignonette and of roses and of eau-de-Cologne? How, then, can we convey to the reader such a conception of what a musical composition is really like, that he should recognise it from the description the first time that he hears it actually sounding in his ears?

Nevertheless, I think it is quite possible to say something concerning the wonderful work of Sebastian Bach, which may be interesting even to those whose musical perceptions are not of the keenest order, but who recognise in others the existence of this strange enthusiasm for sounds which to themselves are productive neither of pleasure nor pain. Almost all men admit that the enjoyment of music, as a thing both of the intellect and the emotions, is a fact in human nature, which has to be accounted for, or at least analysed, by everyone who pretends to explain that complete correspondence between the inner and the outer life of humanity which is the source at once of our profoundest joys and our acutest pains.

Another change is taking place in English life which is not less remarkable, and which involves that very conception of human nature in its completest form upon which is based the view which I am about to lay before the reader. It used to be held that the one sure token of the presence of profound feeling in a man was his resolute repression of every outer expression of it. "Tears, idle tears, we know not what you mean," was the constant saying of the true-born Briton, in a sense the very reverse of that which the author of the famous line himself ever intended. But the opinion of the most influential intellects is changing, even on this delicate question also. And a fresh impulse will be given to the new idea by the Life and Correspondence of the very man



who, of all typical Englishmen, would have been supposed to be least given to weeping, out of all the writers and politicians of the age. I wonder what our grandfathers would have thought if they could have heard that Macaulay was set crying violently by reading afresh the four last books of the Iliad when he was nearly fifty years old; and that he was as susceptible to certain tear-compelling elements in human life and in books, as books, as was ever Frenchman, or Italian, or German to the influences of poetry, music, and art.

This, then, is the great fact in our complex nature which receives a special illustration from the great musical work lately presented to the London world;—the fact that the perception of what we call law, or order, or harmony, or development, in the universe, exercises a distinct influence upon the emotional part of our nature, exciting feelings which are difficult to describe, but which are akin to those of joyful affection, and which in many persons tend to express themselves in tears. There is no truth in the notion that the intelligence alone, the *siccum lumen*, is affected by the clear presentation to the mind of law and order in the actual concrete world, or even in the abstractions of pure mathematics. We cannot tell why it is so, but so it is. The mind is not merely delighted, it is emotionally touched, by the following out some subtle mathematical truth, or the sight of some extraordinary adaptation of physical means to the accomplishment of some momentous end. To the essentially non-mathematical understanding the notion may seem ridiculous and unreal, and as preposterous as the excitement of the musician appears to the non-musical looker-on. But it is the fact, nevertheless; and it is a fact which pervades the whole domain of human thought and accomplishments. It is, moreover, entirely different from that species of sensuous pleasure which mingles with our enjoyment of the arts, of poetry, and music; and it has nothing whatever to do with mere association. It is the perception of law, as such, which moves the feelings, as certainly as it enlightens the intellect, not simply by awakening in us a consciousness of gratification, but by calling forth peculiar sensations of tenderness, and that sweet and peaceful certainty that we, infinitely little as we seem to be, are elements in the hidden life of that mighty universe which speaks to us in the twofold voice of beauty and law.

The occasions on which we are thus touched are most various in kind. I have heard of a man, by no means of the sentimental or what is called the soft-hearted sort, being moved to tears by the sight of a regiment of soldiers performing their evolutions. It was no military associations that affected him. He was thinking nothing about death or glory, or the heroism of the battle field. It was simply that he saw a union of life and energy with order, regularity, and the realisation of a controlling idea. It was the combination of law and life which pervades the whole universe, exhibited on the smallest scale, but yet with a definiteness and reality, which moved his sensitiveness.

In the Life of Caroline Herschel, lately published, there is a passage,

taking us into far different realms of thought, which, if I may judge from myself, most powerfully affects the emotions, from the intensity of the force with which it exhibits the mightiness of the universe as the expression of eternal law and eternal life. When her nephew, Sir John Herschel, went to the Cape on his famous astronomical errand, his aunt, then an old woman living at Hanover, begged him to examine, with all the advantages of the clear southern sky, a certain spot in the constellation *Scorpio*, which had once powerfully excited her brother, Sir William, when looking through his forty-feet telescope at Slough, under all the disadvantages of our northern atmosphere. "Es ist gewisslich ein Loch im Himmel!" he had exclaimed—"There is certainly a hole in the heavens!"—observing that at the spot in question there was apparently a total absence of any star or nebula, such as those which in countless myriads overspread the entire firmament. Acting on his aunt's suggestion, Sir John found that his father's belief was correct; and that he was looking at a place where no mortal eye, with every apparatus that skill could devise, could detect one solitary gleam of far-off existence. Here, to my mind, is just one of those instances in which the law and order of the universe in its very utmost conceivable magnitude is brought before the mind in its emotional susceptibility as well as its profoundest intellectual reach. Suddenly, as we watch the innumerable stars, our eyes fill with tears, and we are still. The mind seems to have made one further step in the direction of that infinity which it can never reach, and never even attempt to comprehend. The stars are all before us, but there is something beyond them all. All that we see may be a speck, and must be a speck, in the actual infinite; and everywhere there is law, and order, and harmony, and life.

It is the same sense of living unity and harmony which is the vital element of the beauty of the old Greek literature and art, and which it is the custom to call the beauty of "form." But what is the beauty of form? What is it that melts our tenderness into life in the outline of a Greek vase, or in the lights and shades of a Greek gem, or in half-a-dozen lines of Homer or Sophocles? Surely it is the recognition of some subtle energy, working in loving obedience to the dictates of unchanging law, which law, in its essential idea, supplies us with the nearest conception that we can form of the Infinite and the Eternal. The exquisite perfection of the Greek embodiments of the idea of "form" is, indeed, so unrivalled, that we are sometimes apt to overlook, especially in their sculpture, the intensity of the human element which lives in Greek art and literature. I do not myself feel this supposed deficiency in the humanity of Greek art. But if such were really the case, it would only bring out more clearly the truth which I am attempting to illustrate; for it is unquestionable that Greek art, as a pure expression of the idea of form, does exercise upon very many minds an emotional influence, which to the ignorant multitude seems absurd, and in whose reality the multitude does not believe.

So, again, with purely literary beauty, beyond the range of purely Greek genius. We are touched by the perfection of literary grace and delicacy and force, simply because this perfection strikes a chord within us, which is attuned to answer to the voice of law and order, as the strings of the Æolian harp quiver in melody beneath the summer breeze. Undoubtedly, in many of these cases the element of human sympathy mingles with the sense of pure beauty, and we may imagine that it is only from love and pity for our fellow-creatures that we find ourselves so moved. There is the beauty of simplicity and unaffectedness, it is true, in such tear-compelling sentences as the story of Joseph making himself known to his brethren, or the Scotch songs "Caller herrin" and "There's nae luck about the house," or the recognition of Harry Bertram by Dominie Sampson in "Guy Mannering." But there are others in which the human sympathy is stirred within us with a special fervour through our perception of the singular artistic skill of the writer, and of the wonderful charm of the form of his sentences and the concentrated propriety of every syllable that he utters. Such is the concluding paragraph in Tacitus's *Life of Agricola*, beginning "*Si quis piorum Manibus locus*"; such are Cowper's verses on the Loss of the Royal George; and such is Tennyson's "Break, break, break, on thy cold grey stones, O sea!" In all these, it is not merely the expression of the intensity of the loss which the heart has sustained which moves us; it is the exquisite finish of the writing, the balance of sentence and phrase, the propriety of every word, the musical flow of sound, felt rather than distinctly heard, the embodiment, that is, of living law and order, which quickens our sensibilities into a more instant response, and makes us doubt whether our enjoyment is more sad or our sorrow more joyful.

And such is the explanation of the effect of that unrivalled among all choral masterpieces which has lately appeared to many persons as a species of revelation of a power in music which they had never before dreamed of. All music is the expression of the beauty of form through the medium of sound. That form varies to a vast extent, just as the written languages of men vary, as the forms of versification vary, as the possible combinations of colour, the linear shapes of the human countenance, the outlines of vases, of dress, of architectural structure and decoration, all vary. But just as in all these there can be no beauty without the proportion of parts, without symmetry, without the sentiment of life united with the conception of over-ruling law and order, it is with musical expression.

Music, again, possesses a power peculiarly its own. It can excite the purely emotional portion of our nature to a degree without parallel in any other art in which a definite human feeling is not presented to us. In its vagueness lies concealed a readiness to adapt itself to the expression of combined thought and feeling with an intensity altogether transcending any other vehicle which our nature possesses. And the secret of this power I take to be this: Every man and woman who

thinks and feels, except in the most common-place and superficial fashion, is conscious, in some degree, of the inexplicable mysteriousness of the life we live and of the universe we live in. It is not a question of this or that theology, or of this or that philosophy, or of this or that mode of living. All of us are conscious of the same desire to escape from the bondage of our personal loneliness and ignorance into some sort of freer atmosphere, in which our faculties may range and expand in a new and more unhampered exercise, and our enjoyment of existence and our perceptions of truths may become more definite and real.

And it is because it puts into a species of articulate voice this undying desire, that music exercises its spell upon those who are sensitive to its charm. As in all other matters, men are variously endowed in this respect, and this endowment does not necessarily accompany any other peculiarity of natural endowment. At the same time, the sensibility to music takes various forms, in exact accordance with the rest of a man's nature. The man of shallow nature likes one kind of music, the man of thought and depth loves another. There is music which touches the weak and morbid, but which is repellent to all healthy and masculine minds. There is music which by no possibility can be understood and enjoyed by a fool; and there is music which is essentially low and vulgar.

Further, there is that element in music which is most closely connected with its more purely sensuous quality, in which it most nearly resembles the impressions produced by colour. The brain is affected through the ear by certain combinations of sound, as it is affected through the eye by certain combinations of hue. These effects are intimately connected with certain atmospheric, or, as they are called, acoustic phenomena; just as the impressions of colour depend, not merely upon the effect of each single colour upon the retina, but upon the laws of complementary colour, and upon the incessant production of what is termed the *spectrum* of each tint that is presented to the retina. Hence, in music, the endless variations in the beauty and force of tune, or melody, as such. Hence it is that so much music is dry and dull, just as many combinations of colour are dull, and as many a writer's literary style is dull, or cold, or inexpressive.

Once more, into music the element of elaboration and complication enters, more thoroughly than into any other species of art or of literature. Hence, it furnishes a more eloquent expression of the ideas of law, order and life, than any other of the works of man. To those who are defective in musical organisation, this very elaboration makes music of a complicated structure all the more tedious and incomprehensible; and the same is the result with those whose intellect is dull and whose character is weak. Cultivation, also, is of course necessary for the comprehension and enjoyment of music, in which these ideas of law and order and mysterious vastness are embodied. So it is with all our faculties. The purest natural taste never comprehended all the truth and beauty

of the Elgin marbles without a certain degree of serious study of the laws of the sculptor's art. What uncultured mind ever could perceive the loveliness of the "Odyssey," or of Wordsworth's "Ode on Immortality," or of the "In Memoriam?"

But granting the presence of the natural musical capacity properly cultivated, and the intelligence, the emotional susceptibility and the healthy activity of the listener, then I say that in those works which unite profound elaboration to intense tunefulness, he finds an expression of all that is best and noblest in his nature, and is lifted into a region of thought and feeling where this present existence seems for the moment to have vanished away. And among such works, the Mass in B Minor stands pre-eminent. It is to the greatest choral writings of other composers what the marbles of the Parthenon are to all other sculpture, and what Shakespeare is to all other poets. Those who look for this pre-eminence in its songs will be disappointed, admirable as they are. It is in the succession of its gigantic choruses that it leaves all other music behind, as comparatively slight and inexpressive. They have all the brilliant and masterly clearness of Handel's best choruses, all his tunefulness and propriety of expression; but they excel them in a boundless richness of elaboration and development, in a union of complication and multitudinousness of detail with a perfect unity and simplicity of general effect, and in a power of inventing and working out of orchestral accompaniment which Handel, great above all others, never achieved.

The result is what I can only describe by the words magnificence and splendour. It is not the same thing as the tenderness and graceful beauty and brilliancy of Mozart, nor the passionate power and almost fierce intensity of Beethoven. We wonder how any such combination of elaboration and tune ever came forth from the brain of one man; just as, when we look up at the stars, we are overwhelmed with a sense of mingled order and loveliness, or as the sight of a superb sunset affects us with a sense of mingled amazement and joy. One feeling, 'too, is aroused by these choruses to a degree which I imagine is all their own; and that is, a sense of exultation. "I never thought," one says to oneself, as the mighty torrent of sound streams onwards, "that humanity could find a tongue so eloquent." We many of us know what is that strange sensation of excitement and consciousness of hidden power, together with a kind of feeling as if the triviality of life was for the moment ended, which is at times kindled in us by a few lines of poetry, or a few words in prose; and just such, I venture to assure the non-musical thinker who has given me his attention through these few pages, is the effect of these transcendent choruses; and I am confident that there are thousands and tens of thousands, even in this comparatively unmusical England, who, if they could hear them, would confess that I have not, in what I have said, been guilty of one word of exaggeration.

## The Stonement of Team Dundas.

### BOOK II.

#### CHAPTER XXI.

##### IN HIS RIGHT MIND.



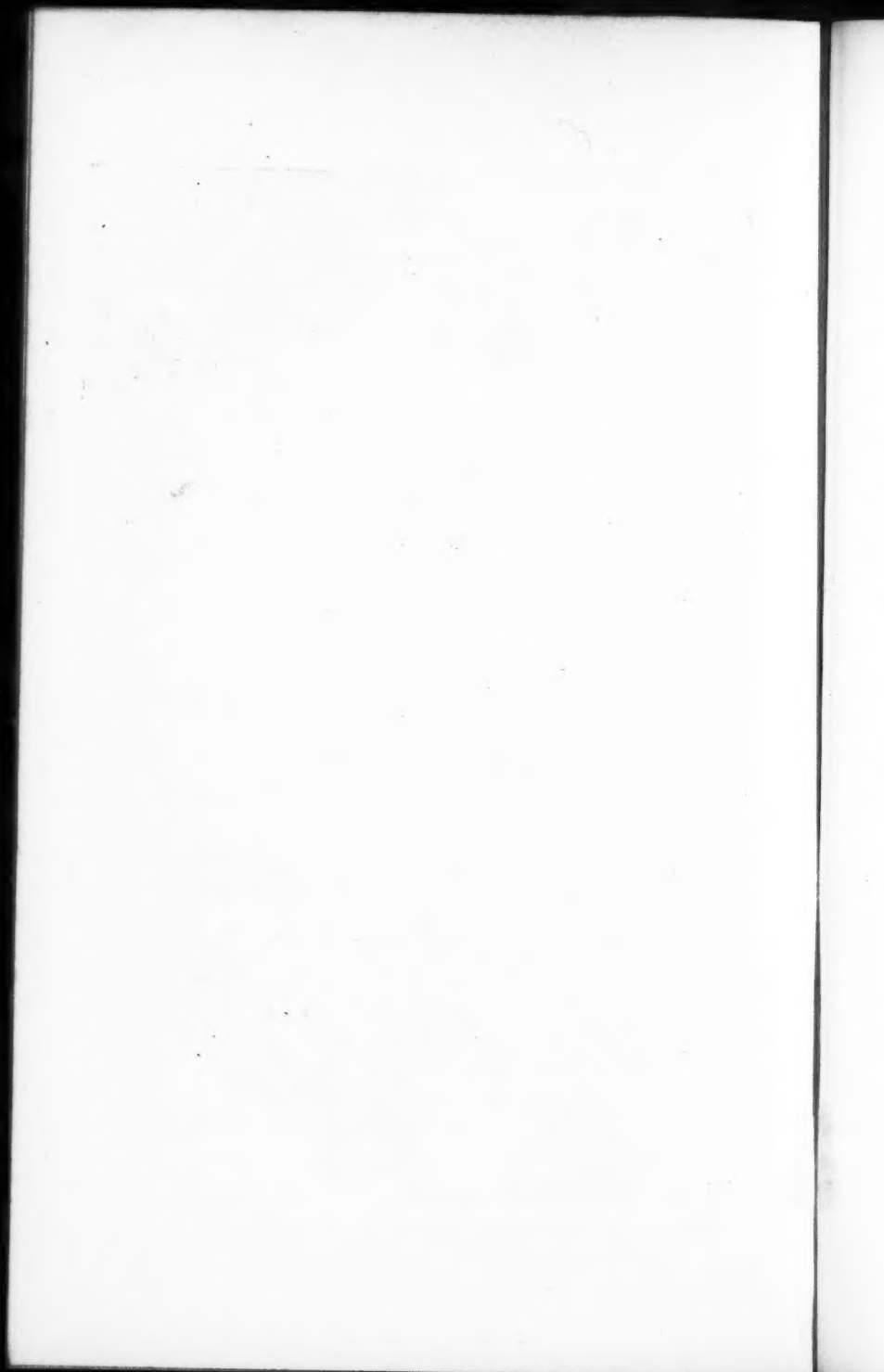
NOTHING is easier to a clever woman than to catch a heart at the rebound. Samson, blind and sorrowful, lays his weary head in the lap of that watchful Delilah who has been biding her time, knowing that it would come; and when he wakes up again he finds his locks shorn and his strength, with his freedom, gone. Then it is too late. Sorrow, revolt, complaint—all are of no avail. He has nothing for it but to accept the irremediable quietly, and sleep on, determined to find his dreams pleasant and his pillow

sweet, as some good, careless fellows do. Others, unfortunately for themselves, resent the mistake that they have made and the snare into which they have fallen, and cannot, do what they will, reconcile themselves to their disaster or refrain from shaking their chains dismally. Adelaide had been Edgar's Delilah; watchful, patient, respectable. She had bided her time and waited; and now she was reaping her reward. Samson had delivered himself into her hand, and she had bound him with fetters stronger than green withes. The decisive words had been spoken; the needful preliminaries arranged; and a few days now would see the great aim of her life fulfilled, and the crowning stone flung on the cairn of the delusive past. It was a proud moment for her; and all the more in that she owed her success solely to her own tact and determination; for the very fitness of things which had helped to bring this marriage about had been the fitness which she herself had created.





A LITTLE CHILD FROM A HIND'S HUT NEAR STOOD BESIDE THE PROSTRATE FIGURE.



There was to be no vulgar parade, no noisy rejoicing at this wedding between the owner of the Hill and the rector's daughter; only simple arrangements of that solid magnificence and proud exclusiveness which are so dear to English county families; and which assort better with their condition than the more noisy demonstrations, the more showy finery of the town-bred rich. Besides, though the marriage was one in every way satisfactory, judging by outside facts—the only measuring-tape held by the world—it had its own secret history which did not agree with a very demonstrative ceremonial; and Adelaide was wise, though she was ambitious. She was content to have and to hold that which she had so long desired, without laying too much stress on the manner of assignment. To be installed mistress of the Hill, and head of the society for ten miles round, were the two clauses in the marriage lines which were to the real purpose. Whether she had one bridesmaid or a dozen, and whether her father gave a breakfast to ten guests or a hundred, were adventitious circumstances not affecting the central fact. And if we have that central fact set square and firm, who in his senses troubles himself about the fringe of adventitious circumstance? When we are buying a house we look to the beams and the walls, not to the Banksia roses up the porch or to the volute of the cornice.

The marriage between these two persons so manifestly made for each other had not been arranged in a dark corner, but neither had it been paraded in broad day or published at the market-cross. If there was no bond of secrecy to be kept, no blare of trumpets had been sounded. It was quietly announced now to one now to another, as it might chance; and thus filtered noiselessly through the place and beyond, till it came at last to Alick Corfield, down at Monk Grange, doing his best to lift up Leam in her own esteem by his devotion, and to soften the intenser bitterness of her life by the unchanging sweetness of his love.

Here again his principles and his affection, his conscience and his heart, came into collision. Should he tell her of this marriage? She ought to know—must know some day—but he shrank from the painful task of enlightening her. Good and true in soul as he was, he was weak where his affections were concerned. He had been bred on a wrong plan for the practice of sharp mental surgery, and though capable of suffering martyrdom on his own account, was incapable of giving pain to others—least of all to those whom he loved.

Wherefore he held his peace; and Leam was still ignorant of the fact that Edgar Harrowby was, as North Aston phrased it, in his right mind at last, and about to marry Adelaide Birkett, as he ought to have done when he first came home. Sufficient to the day, he thought. Leam's health had run down too much to make it advisable to give her any kind of shock, and it was best to let her present wounds heal before others were inflicted. Let her then rest in peace and blessed unconsciousness of the evil to come, till it could be no longer warded off! If he was doing wrong not to tell her, he would bear the burden on his own soul—as he

had been content to bear that other, and would, had it been possible, have borne others even weightier!

Edgar had behaved very well; Adelaide had behaved very well. On all regarding Leam he had kept absolute silence, and she had respected that silence. He had not confessed that he had been the accepted lover of Leam Dundas for the space of two days and a half; and she, though she knew that something had happened between them, never inquired how much, nor yet what had been the circumstance which had sent Edgar to her brokenhearted on that Friday evening, and which, in all probability, had been the circumstance that had caused Leam's mysterious disappearance. In her heart she was curious enough. That was but natural; she would not have been a woman else. Outwardly she was restrained and sensible, and let the mystery pass as a thing not interesting because not concerning her. But she often pondered on it in secret, and wearied herself in conjectures, not one of which was absolutely true, though the main thread of all was not far off the truth—Leam had done something shameful, and Edgar had found it out.

What that shameful thing was, and how Edgar had found it out, remained the double heart of the mystery which no conjecture could lay bare. It said something for Adelaide's strength of purpose that she could accept her ignorance on such a matter so quietly. Perhaps she looked through the coming years to the time when marriage had made her safe, and she need not be so careful as now; when, by coaxings at the right moment, and, if coaxings would not do, by reproaches, tears, untiring iterations, which, like constant droppings wearing down the granite, grind down into plasticity the hardest will at last, she would be able to force from the husband safely secured in the matrimonial fastness what it would be dangerous to even filch by a clever trick from the free-standing lover, with marriageable loopholes still before him. At all events, she refrained from questioning now; and Edgar was profoundly grateful to her for her sweet delicacy and sympathetic feeling.

For himself, his satisfaction in his marriage was of a rather grim kind. It was marriage and it was not love; which for a man whose line of life had hitherto run the reverse way seems hard to bear. It was all the difference between grey days and rosy ones; and to those used to roses, leaves grey and dead are poor substitutes. Still the marriage had its confessed advantages, and he must be content to have saved so much out of the fire. On this broad philosophic basis, then, he built up his hopes for the future, and made no doubt that he should get on as well as his neighbours. And when he was meditating after dinner, well-fed, resigned, and soothed, he used to ask himself—would Leam have been the right kind of wife for him after all? If the Hill had been a South Sea Island, and himself and Leam the only inmates, there would have been no doubt as to their fitness for each other; but he was Major Harrowby, a magistrate and a gentleman, fettered by conventionalities of all kinds, not a dusky youth with a floral wardrobe and as few responsi-

bilities as garments; and being this, perhaps—with a heavy sigh—Adelaide was the wiser bargain! She looked very pretty to-day, and talked very nicely; and he was glad she liked those *quenelles*; he liked women to have good taste.

All this was the right kind of thing for a woman of Adelaide's composed temperament and quiet habits. The tumultuous passion of an ardent lover would have embarrassed her, and the constant presence of an adoring one would have bored her; and she disliked to be embarrassed quite as much as she disliked to be bored. What she wanted was reasonableness, social success, and decorum; and she had all in the exact proportions desired. Therewith she made herself content, and regretted nothing of that inner sweetness, that poetic fervour which, not having, she did not miss, and which, had she had, she would not have understood.

When the morning came the village flocked to the church to see a wedding by no means so pretty as Josephine's, but infinitely more stately. It was the solid compressed weight of gold as compared with the fluffy bulk of feathers; and only fools like feathers better than gold. To be sure certain circumstances were the same as before. There were the village children, for instance; but, instead of the brilliant combination of scarlet and white and blue that had made such a pretty show in the early summer, their dresses now were a dull dark purple, as more serviceable in the coming winter. To be sure, too, they strewn flowers on the fair bride's path as she left the church, successful at last; but for the roses and jessamine, honeysuckle and fair Mary lilies that had been dear, comely Josephine's metaphorical way of walking, hollyhocks and dahlias, chrysanthemums and melancholy amaranths, were Adelaide's.

The sisters of the bridegroom assisted again as before; but, instead of the bright rose-colour which composed so well and symbolised flowers, the silver grey in which the Misses Harrowby were dressed had a suggestion of mourning that was scarcely inspiring for the occasion.

No pretty girls, the one like a monthly rose, the other like a burning pomegranate bud, were there to eclipse by their beauty the faded homeliness of the elders—only the bride herself to show in solitary beauty amid so much that was less than fair. And even little Fina was but a spectator this time, not an official; and not so much caressed by Major Harrowby as before.

There was no ball in the evening; no fond wishes roused into activity because of the suggestiveness of that morning's ceremonies; no intoxicating revelations, no bewildering ecstasies to grow out of it. All was as cold and smooth as ice—the dresses, the breakfast, the speeches, the emotions; he was simply in his right mind, and she was Mrs. Harrowby of the Hill.

There was no rushing off either to Paris and a fatiguing continental tour as the best method of beginning married life and rubbing down the inevitable angles of awkwardness and difference. Edgar had not the heart

to travel; and Adelaide had the true insular contempt for all things foreign and unknown. It was more to the taste of both to go to the lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland than to any overrated mill-pond of Como or Lucerne. September is a grand month for the North in general, and they were not yet more than half way through; the early autumn tints of wood and mountain side are even more enchanting than the tender greenery of the spring; and both argued in concert that every patriotic Briton ought to be acquainted with the choice bits of his native land before running after transmarine show-places. Hence they agreed, mutually consulting and consenting, that they would make a quiet little home tour which would fulfil a duty, save fatigue, and not keep them too long from home. But as the rank and file of hearers are mainly thick witted, the report got about in North Aston that they were going to Scotland; and it was Scotland that Alick heard from his mother, and Scotland that Mr. Gryce did not write to his sister. Had he known the truth, he would have given Alick a hint, and Leam would have been watched lest, by a miracle, she had fallen into danger; for, after all, it would seem as if it must needs be a miracle that would bring her path and theirs to a common point of contact.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### MY QUEEN STILL.

HAD Leam been suspicious or egoistic, she would have seen that something unusual was pressing on Alick at this time. Always tender and respectful, his manner had had for the last few days a certain loving watchfulness of protection, a certain chivalrous devotion and knightly kind of reverence, which implied something hurtful from which to defend, something humiliating from which to shield her.

It would have given anyone else cause for thought; but Leam, once so sensitive and intolerant, seemed now to be scarcely touched by anything from without. When she caught Alick's melancholy eyes fixed on her, full of tears, she only thought, "Poor Alick! how unhappy he is—that is my doing!" and when he hovered about her, treating her with as much deference as if she had been some saintly princess condescending to her vassal, she murmured, "How good he is to me; and I am so wicked!"

But she did not look deeper, nor ask herself why was this goodness so specially active now?

And Alick was unhappy; as much for the change in Leam herself as for the grief that had to come to her when she should hear how soon the man whom she loved so faithfully had consoled himself and taken another to fill the place which was to have been hers. If she would but be more like herself and not so pathetically patient, not so mournfully



gentle! he thought tearfully. If only she would look at him with the old superb disdain, then turn away her eyes with the girlish scorn that had so often made him blush and writhe with pleased embarrassment—call him stupid—tell him he should not talk nonsense—that he knew nothing of what he was saying—and treat him with that grand manner of calm contempt, that exquisite assumption of superiority, which was the most delicious thing he had ever known, he would not be so unhappy. But now, so patient, so humble, so sad—as a Christian he knew that he ought to rejoice to see the pride of her heart broken and the grace of humility and penitence in its stead; but as the boy who had grown into the man, worshipping, this spectacle of the dis-crowned queen with her purple in the dust and her sceptre fallen from her hand, was one that nearly broke his heart to see.

His beloved young queen! If she had been faithful to his mother, so would he be to her; and how stained and soiled so ever her royal robes, with her crown trodden under foot in the mire, and her sceptre broken in her guilty hand, she should still be to him regal, revered, adored, his queen if discrowned, his saintly princess condescending to her vassal, no matter how much she had been humbled, how far abased by sin and its shadow shame. When with him she should at least feel her best self, and that she was with one to whom she never could be aught but noble and beloved. If circumstance and conscience had humiliated her, the reverence of love, the fidelity of respect should reinstate her; and never in his most adoring moments at the old home had Alick paid her the profound devotion that he paid her now.

One day they met on the fell as usual. They often met on the fell-side; for Alick, whose windows commanded Windy Brow, had learnt Leam's habits by heart as Edgar Harrowby had done before him, and a good field-glass told him all that he wanted to know. This was the day of Edgar's marriage with Adelaide. It was just about this time, eleven o'clock, that the ceremony was being performed and the vows, consecrated to Leam, passed on to her successor. But how little that beloved and discarded one knew what disloyalty to her memory was being enacted at this moment! and how terrible it would be to her when she did know, as some day she must!

Alick watching her as she wandered slowly on before, he striding after her to overtake her, as he should before she had quite reached the fell-top, felt his heart burn with indignation against the man who could not find in his love enough grace for her sin, who would not share her crime by his own sacrifice of ideal purity. To him Leam, blood-stained and besmirched, was better than anyone else clad in shining garments and accepted; and he hated Edgar Harrowby, not because he had been loved, but because he had not been brave enough to accept the conditions of that love. For though Leam had told him nothing directly, he was sure that he knew all, and that she had fled from North Aston because, having confessed, Edgar had renounced.

He felt too as if he could not let her out of his sight to-day; as if he must be at hand to protect her, should the blow by some bad miracle fall on her dear head. It seemed as if the very bracken on the fell would whisper to her what cruel thing was being done to her memory to-day, and as if he alone could help her, he alone protect her.

Presently she stopped and sat down on a jutting bit of rock. Once so fibrous, firm, well-knit, now her strength was soon exhausted. She easily lost her breath; her heart had become more troublesome than ever was poor Madame's; and the small arched feet that once gripped the ground like feet of steel now moved slowly and languidly, all their elasticity gone like the rest of her former power. Hence, she never got far from home now; and she was fain to walk so slowly, especially on an ascent, that Alick's long legs had no difficulty in overtaking her, how far so ever her start might have been.

He soon drew up to her and stood before her as she sat.

"Are you well to-day?" he asked anxiously, looking down on her as he stood towering above her, honest and ungainly, his rugged face full of tenderness.

She was very white; white even to her lips; and looked, he thought, strangely wasted. The curling rings of dark hair, golden-edged, that came from beneath her hat, were matted against her forehead with the treacherous damps of weakness; and the mournful eyes, far too large and bright, with their dilated pupils and look of fixed pain, were encircled by dark lines that made them look even larger and more mournful than before. Alick had thought her fearfully changed when he had first seen her on his arrival; but to-day she looked as if the bond between her and life had suddenly worn so slight, it needed but a feather's touch to break it altogether.

"Well? Yes," she answered quietly. "Why do you ask?"

"I thought you looked a little ill—a little delicate," said Alick, anxiously.

She drew a deep breath, checked at once by a sudden pain.

"No," she said when the spasm passed, "I am not ill; but I am tired. I am always tired now."

"You ought to see a doctor. Why does not Miss Gryce send over to the town for one?" said Alick, looking vaguely into the distance.

"Why should she?" answered Leam. "It is nothing."

"It makes us all anxious to see you look so ill!" he urged. "For our sakes you ought to take care of yourself, my dear, and see some one who would do you good."

She looked at him plaintively.

"Who are us?" she said. "I have no one now."

Tears filled Alick's eyes. Ah! it had been always thus—he was nothing, never had been anything to her! He who had loved her best had harvested least!

"Am I no one?" he asked, with nothing of jealous pain, only with a

hopeless kind of despondency that scarcely rose to the level of entreaty, still less of reproach. "You know what you are to me," lovingly.

She looked distressed, for a moment almost frightened.

"No, do not be afraid," he continued, answering her look. "I will not offend you, Leam. I love you too well to pain you by my own selfishness. I only want to help in your peace, your happiness."

"So you do," she answered kindly. "You are all I have now! I should be very unhappy without you."

"There is not much happiness for you here anyhow," he answered. "At the best, and wishing to do the best, who can be of any good to you? I am only an awkward kind of animal who would fight for you to the death, if need be, and protect you—with my life, Leam, if it had to be done!—but I am no one. And Miss Gryce is good in her own way, and means to do what is right; but her place is no place for you. You have nothing there you ought to have, and how terrible it is to see you suffer as you do in such a household!"

She raised her hand.

"Hush!" she said gently, "I suffer only what I deserve." And again looking at him kindly, she repeated; "and I have you."

"I know I ought to be glad to hear you say so; and for myself, oh! you do not know, my dear, what pleasure it gives me—no, it is more than pleasure—to think that I can be of any use to you! But I cannot bear it all the same!" [said Alick, his lips quivering. "It breaks my heart to see you so humble and so patient—grateful to me!—so unlike your old imperious self. If only you would scold me sometimes, and tell me I am absurd, and a stupid cold-blooded Englishman, and know nothing, as you used to do, I could bear your bitterest contempt better than this patience! It does not seem natural or good from you to me!"]

"I used to be imperious when I had the right," said Leam; "or thought I had. Now every one is better than I am. You always were; but others are now."

"No! no!" cried Alick vehemently. "No, Leam! Remember—you were such a child—God Himself cannot be angry with you, such a mere child as you were!"

"The thing is the same," she answered with a shudder.

"But if man sees the fact, God understands the circumstances!" cried Alick. "And the Infinite Mercy reaches to all and redeems all!"

"Listen, Alick," said Leam suddenly, raising her head and speaking as one who intended to speak to the point. "I do not care to talk of myself; but I want to say something. When I went to school and they taught me, told me things I did not know—had not heard of—or, if I had, had disbelieved and despised—I began to see, after a time, that there was really something in the world besides mamma and Spain; and that mamma did not know everything, as I once thought. Then I began to think of what I had done. The older I grew the more I thought of it; and the more I

saw it was wicked. I had not done it for wickedness; but it was, all the same. I thought I was doing right at the time. I only thought of mamma, and that I would protect her, and hinder her from being unhappy. When I came home I began to be most miserable of all. Everything reminded me; and I was so sorry for papa, and poor little Fina too. I had the thought of it always with me. I never lost it quite, though sometimes I did not think of it so clearly as at others. Sometimes I felt as if I must tell it to papa. I knew you knew; but I was ashamed to speak to you. I did not want to hear you say that you knew. I felt as if I could not have borne that."

"And yet you might have trusted me," said Alick in a low voice. "I respected you too much to give you pain."

"I knew that," she answered; "still, I did not want to have to humble myself to you. Then"—she stopped; a slight colour came into her wan face and her eyes filled with tears; but she conquered her emotion and her reluctance—for this was a difficult passage to proud, reserved Leam—but she conquered herself as part of her penance, and went on:—"then Major Harrowby was with me a good deal. You were ill; all the others were away; and I saw him nearly every day. I never thought of it when I was with him. I do not know why, but he seemed to rest me like sleep; and I never felt when with him that I had done such a dreadful crime. It went on like this till papa married. That evening he told me he loved me. And then, Alick, I knew that I loved him, and had loved him from the first without knowing it. Don't let me cry; dear Alick, don't please!" she broke off with a sudden sob, covering her face with her hands.

"No, Leam, you must not cry," said Alick, his own voice full of tears. "It will make you ill, dear; you must not. And nothing, no one, is worth one of your tears!" he added vehemently, cursing Edgar in his heart with a passion that startled even himself.

After a few moments Leam lifted up her face again. Once more will had conquered weakness, and her eyes were dry.

"You are so kind to me," she said a little faintly. "You must not think I do not feel it because I do not say much. But I want to tell you all. I was so happy then!" she went on to say, clasping her thin hands nervously in each other. "For just two days, Alick—two days out of my life—my whole life! I cannot tell you what those two days were to me. When I look back it seems as if it had been a sudden ending of incessant pain, or coming into the light from the dark. It was like heaven; and I felt so innocent and free! Then there came that dreadful storm. Do you remember it? I was in my own room; and," shuddering, "one flash shot right over the Commandment table. It seemed to fall like a line of fire across that one—you know what I mean. Then I knew that I had been spoken to by someone from heaven, and made to understand that I was not fit to be his wife. I was a murderess—what an awful word! I had forgotten till now who and what I really was. Now I had to re-

member. For his own sake, and because I loved him, I must give him up. And I did. I told him the truth, and we parted."

"It was a cowardly shame," flashed Alick angrily; "he was not worthy of your love!"

"No, no, don't say that!" she answered. "It was right, quite right! He could not marry such a wretch as I am; and would I have degraded him so much? when I loved him as I do? He was quite wise and right to let me go. He loved me. I know he loved me, and I am sure he loves me still; he is too noble to change like the wind. He could not do that. Perhaps when I die, and I am made good in purgatory—fit for him, great and good as he is—we shall meet in heaven and not part again. I do not think I could go on living if I did not believe that. It is the only thing I ask of God and the saints—to make me good enough to live with him in heaven when we both die. And sometimes I feel as if God would be good and kind, and would listen to me, and grant this to me."

She said this with a child's fervour and a child's simplicity; looking up to the sky with a prayer in her eyes that interpreted itself.

Alick did not speak. He felt suffocated, choked by the bitter thought of how pitifully she was mistaken; by the knowledge that the love on which she had counted for all eternity had not lasted two short months—that to-day was Edgar's wedding-day, and while she spoke of living with him for ever, he had forgotten her for Adelaide Birkett and the marriage which it was conventionally fitting, socially wise that he should make!

"I will tell you all, now," Leam said, after a pause. "After I had confessed to Major Harrowby, I felt as if I could not live at home any longer, and as if I did not care who knew. I went to Mr. Gryce. I met him in the wood where I had seen him go, and told him, too, everything. He helped me as he had said he would one day; for he had found it out, I do not know how. He made me call myself Leonora Darley, and brought me here as his adopted daughter. I do not think anything hurt me more, after I lost *him*, than to deny mamma's name and call myself by a false one. It was like denying mamma!"

"But it is safer if you do not want to be known," said Alick soothingly.

"Yes," she sighed, "it is safer; but it is horrid all the same. But I have no right to complain," she added hastily, as if to atone for the little flash of the old spirit that had broken out. "It is better too, as you say. No one knows me here, and no one at home knows where I am."

"Not your father?"

"No," she answered, her colour rising. "I wrote to papa, and told him what I had done—told him everything—and that I would never trouble him again. As he took no pains to find me out, no one will. Sometimes I think though, he—Major Harrowby—will want to find me. I seem to dream of it sometimes!"

Alick shivered. "I hope not," he said in an altered voice.

"Better not!" murmured Leam in a sad heartbroken way.

"Better let me be the only one who knows where you are," he said earnestly. "You can trust me."

"And him too," said Leam, as she would have said it of her mother.

"I hope so; but I only know myself," answered Alick.

"Yes. I can trust him—and you too," she said with the sweetest little inclination of her head. "I know how good and true you are, Alick!"

"Oh! if she could but have loved me!" thought poor Alick. "How I would have protected and cared for her—soothed her wounded spirit and raised her again in her own esteem! But she gave her love where it was not prized, and Adelaide Birkett is fitter for him than Leam!"

Which was the same, to his mind, as saying that, to Edgar darkness was more beautiful than light, the winter a fairer season than the spring. Presently, answering his own thoughts, he said, in his honest clumsy way—

"But you will forget him in time, Leam! You cannot go on like this for ever. It will wear you out—you must forget him and everything else, and be yourself again!"

She looked up at him in astonishment.

"Forget Major Harrowby?" she repeated, in a low distinct voice. "What are you saying? How could I forget him? Have I forgotten mamma? Why should I? He is the best and greatest man I have ever known. So noble! so true! I should die if I forgot him!"

Alick groaned and turned away, and Leam looked at him for one instant in the superb way of olden days. Then her eyes softened and her face grew tender. She laid her hand on Alick's arm, and said with exquisite pathos—

"Do not envy me the only joy I have. You are good to me—so good!—my friend, my only one;—but Edgar!"

She hid her face in her hands, and Alick knelt down by her in a burst of anguish almost as bitter as her own.

After this there was no more talk; and a long silence fell between them. Leam indeed seemed to have exhausted herself. Silent, reserved, and frail, her long speaking, so unusual and so uncongenial to her, had evidently tried her greatly. The strong September wind too blew sharp and keen, and now that the excitement of her confession was over she became faint and cold. But she got up, and drew one or two checked half-sobbing breaths, looking round as if wakened up out of a sleep, and shivering, said she would go home.

She tottered however as she tried to walk, and was forced to take Alick's arm to keep her from falling. Truly she was strangely weak to-day! She wiped the clammy damps from her forehead and her lips, and said, in a half-pleasant, half-mournful tone, that she was ashamed to be so silly, and that she did not know what had come to her.



As Alick felt her slight hand on his arm—and when he had to stop and let her lean against him to recover breath and gain strength enough to go on—he felt sick at heart for fear ; but oh ! how tender, how full of love ! In her palmiest days he had never loved her as he did now, when, broken and humiliated, she dropped the last remnant of her pride and to the full confession of her sin added also that of her weakness.

"How good you are !" she said again, as they were standing there on the fell, she leaning against his arm as if it had been the branch of a tree, the back of a chair, or any other merely inanimate method of support ; he not only concealing, but conquering, all personality of his love that he might the better support, protect, and assist her. "How kind and generous ! I wonder you can bear with me at all !"

"Surely !" he remonstrated, "I am honoured by you, Leam !—honoured that you let me be anything to you—your dog, your slave !"

"Do not say that," she said. "You are pure and good, and I—" she shuddered.

"And you are my queen still !" he answered. "Were you stained from head to heel with the soil of sin, you would always be the same to me, dear ; always my flower, my poem, my lady supreme and before all others !"

"Poor Alick !" she sighed ; and then no more was said till they reached the gate of the desolate home which was all that crime and sorrow had left her.

At the gate she turned and said, simply, "I love you very dearly. You know that, don't you ? You are my good, faithful Alick ; like my own brother. You do not think me ungrateful ?"

"God bless you !" said Alick fervently. "Now I am rewarded ! Some day perhaps it will come—when we are both old people, and you have forgotten all this pain—some day, when we are old !"

She smiled faintly, not quite taking his full meaning. She did not refuse his sketchy picture, destroy his vague hope ; but she knew in her heart that her life of love and happiness was over, and that it was not to be restored to her on this side the grave. But she smiled because of the irradiance on the faithful face of the man who loved her ; and when they parted she pressed his hand for the first time in her life, and said again, "Good Alick ! dear friend ! I do love you in my way. Don't you know that I do ?"

"As your dog," he said with the delighted gratitude of a dog ; "and you are my queen, now and ever !"

This was their manner of parting on the day of Edgar Harrowby's marriage with Adelaide Birkett at North Aston, just about the time when the health of the bride and bridegroom was proposed at the breakfast by Cyril Fairbairn.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

## ON THE FELL SIDE.

THE autumn this year at the Lakes was one of the finest that had been known for many seasons. The winds were still, the rain forgot to fall; but the ground was not parched nor vegetation withered, for each evening the sunset mists crept up from lake and river to hang in soft clouds and wreaths about the hill sides and along the low-lying meadows, returning to the earth the sweet freshness which they had taken from it. Through the day the skies were cloudless, opalescent, brilliant, like the skies of a new creation; the granite rocks and rugged mountain tops stood out in the clear air bold in outline and with purple shadows firm and deep; the fells were full of colour and the woods rich in autumnal tints; altogether it was an ideal time for the Lake-land, and the country was at its best.

Though the days were short, yet they were so beautiful while they lasted, and allowed of so much to be done, that Edgar and Adelaide scarcely regretted the rapid closing in of the evenings. Besides, to tell the truth, neither was an enthusiast for this kind of majestic scenery, though both professed to be enchanted as the right thing on a wedding tour. It was the little farce each played to each, and both failed to see through. The inns were luxurious, and not being overcrowded at this "back end of the season," the two handsome young people, with their shining luggage, gorgeous attire, manners of command, and well-filled purses, were as minor royalties to the landlord and waiters; and the "best of everything" was brought like tribute laid at their feet.

They went everywhere, if the way was not too rough, the excursion not too long, and Adelaide would not be too much fatigued; saw everything in a leisurely grandiose way, not giving themselves much trouble, but "doing the Lakes" with that conscientious indifference which makes the doing the main fact, and lets the enjoyment take care of itself. It was very beautiful, very quiet, very fascinating altogether; nevertheless they would not be sorry, they thought, when the tour was over, and they were settled at North Aston to begin life in earnest on their own plan and in their own domain.

They had worked gradually through their self-appointed task, beginning with Coniston as their first centre and ending with dear Derwentwater as their last; and now they were returning home. It was time, for quite suddenly the weather had parted with its gorgeous brilliancy, and had become dim and broken. The chill frosts of early October had killed the colours which a fortnight ago had been so intense; while the rising wind blew down showers of fluttering leaves, and the trees, which only so short a while ago glowed with crimson and shone with gold, were now mere naked boles, rayed with branches bleak and bare. The glory had disappeared, and it was indeed time for going home.

They were returning by way of Carlisle and the beautiful banks of the Eden. Edgar had a fancy too to see something of the country lying to the north of the mountains; that tract, rough and wild, at the back of Skiddaw, which no one ever sees. Besides, the old couplet—

Caldbeck and Caldbeck fells

Is worth all England else—

as halting in grammar as it is inexact in statement, had always struck his imagination. What if that rough tract was a mineral El Dorado, and there was more than a chance of a fortune to be made by the pick and the borer? A friend of his, who had visited the country, had once said so; and Mr. Gryce had been heard to speak enthusiastically of the Roughton Gill Mines—also of some others wherein he had dropped much of that inherited gear which sister Keziah kept in stockings and between the flock and the cover of her mattress. Edgar, a gambler in his own way like most men, had a fancy for abstract mining; and thought he should like to see this wild district with its hypothetical fortune lying a hundred feet below the surface. So they set off on Saturday, intending to drive from Derwentwater by Bassanthwaite and Ulldale to Caldbeck, where they would “rough it” for the night, and the next day, Sunday, take a short survey of the country, and then move a stage onwards to pretty leafy restful Sebergham. It would be a pleasant ending to the tour, if only the weather would keep fair.

Things began fairly well for the travellers. They set out perhaps a little late, considering the time of year; but Adelaide was not an early riser, and they would be housed before the dead dark came on them. They got through the beautiful part of the drive, under Skiddaw and through Bassanthwaite, creditably enough; when Edgar, who had a good organ of locality and believed in himself even more than he was justified in doing, saw, as he walked up the Hawse, that a short cut would take him over one of the outlying fells, whence he could strike the main road and meet the carriage after a practicable little détour which would be only a pleasant walk. He waited for the carriage to join him, and told Adelaide that he meant to cut across the fell—it was a mere trifle, not over two miles at the outside—and that he should meet her after she had gone about five miles round.

“I will come with you,” said Adelaide. “You are sure it is not more than two miles?”

“I should say it is not quite that,” he answered; “but,” anxiously, “you had better not come, dear. The way may be rough, and you are not a very heroic walker!”

“I am good for two miles,” she said; “and really it is rather cold in the carriage. Besides, it is so dull sitting here alone! No, I will come with you, Edgar.”

“As you like, of course,” he said reluctantly; “but I do not vouch for anything. And I do not want to see you tired.”

"I shall not be tired by a two miles' walk!" she answered with her calm decision; and though he had proposed this diversion mainly to be a short time alone—the honeymoon closeness of companionship beginning to pall on him—for the sake of that politeness which he was too well bred to let drop even with his nearest relations, he was obliged to consent to her proposal to go with him, and even to feign the pleasure he did not feel.

It was now about one o'clock; and after they had left the carriage and were ascending the fell, the day, which had not been too promising from the beginning, broke suddenly, as days sometimes do in the North. The sky, which had been always sunless and overcast, became thick and heavy with clouds; the wind dropped, but the air was damp and cold; and a mist crept up from the earth which gathered and thickened till soon the whole distance, and now things near at hand, were blotted out as if a shroud was being woven round the face and form of prostrate nature.

Colder grew the still and windless air; denser the rolling clouds of mist—so dense that it was as penetrating as rain; all landmarks were destroyed, and path there was none: and there, alone on a rough fell-side, without a guide, a compass, or the faintest knowledge of their direction, caught in a mist through which they could not see two feet before them, Edgar and Adelaide transacted the last chapter of their honeymoon book of travels. No shouting brought back a human echo; once they heard the far-off barking of a dog and the bleating of some frightened sheep; and once they fell into the midst of a herd of startled cattle, whereat Adelaide screamed, and was nearly knocked down by one of the young steers starting off at full speed, scared on his side by her cries; now they came upon a bog, where they sank in an instant far over their ankles; and now they stumbled and slipped on a steep bank of shingle, lying there like one of the waste places of creation.

They did not know with what treacherous swiftness these mists gather up from the mountain sides and roll along the moorlands, nor how utterly bewildering they are. Seen through them, no object has its proper value. A boulder is an unscaleable mountain wall, a sheep is as big as a cow, and a cow like an elephant; and you see the precipice only when it is yawning at your feet, and perhaps when it is too late to save the fatal step that plunges you into eternity. It was of no use to sit down now and to bewail because they had been caught in one of these treacherous uprisings, and swathed with nature in her shroud. They must struggle on in the hope to find a place of refuge somewhere; if only the poorest hut of a moorland hind, it would be welcome to them in their present straits; and they must do their best, go on, keep up both strength and courage, for the chance of finding such a shelter, if nothing more satisfactory.

Adelaide had not said much. She was frightened, and now began to be tired; but she did not cry—to be seen. Scarcely either could she reproach her husband with their misfortunes. It had been his proposal

certainly to walk across the fell, but her own will to accompany him; and one can hardly rate a man for the sudden uprising of a mountain mist. Nevertheless, if she was silent she was more angry than sorrowful; and thought the reproaches which she did not say.

As the hours passed her fatigue and fear increased, and her reticence and self-control slackened in proportion. She had held on bravely enough for about two hours; but now her courage gave way; and sitting down on a stone she declared that she could go no farther, that they were lost for ever, and that she should die here where they were; and why had Edgar been so foolish and so wicked as to walk across the fell when he knew neither the country nor the distance, and when he might have seen the mist coming up? Women in distress are never reasonable, and Adelaide was no better than her sex.

Edgar's methods of comfort went for very little. His wife was not enough in love with him personally to be content in that love or consoled by his caresses. And truly the situation was painful! There have been more deaths than one of those lost on the mountains and the moors, and why not they as well as others? Shoutings were in vain; there was nothing to be seen through this dense cloud enveloping everything, and no chance of being found by wandering hind or passing traveller. It was terrible! Wet to the skin, chilled to the marrow, lost in a thick white fog on a pathless fell-side moor, no wonder that poor Adelaide sat down and cried when her powers were exhausted, and with them her endurance!

The day wore on and the desolate bride more than once wished aloud that Edgar had never left his precious Leam Dundas to come to her. The glories of her state, as mistress of the Hill, were fading fast out of her mind; and to die on a wretched Cumberland moor as Edgar Harrowby's wife was not the kind of apotheosis which she coveted. She had wanted to be his wife for the solid goods that her wifeness would bring her, not for the silly transports of a lovesick girl mated to the man of her choice, and content with a desert if shared with him. That was all very well in story-books and poetry, but when you come to the concrete miseries of wet feet, thin boots, garments soaked through and through, rain, desolation, danger, distress, and hunger, poetry flies into space and only the concrete miseries remain. Adelaide's appreciation of romance was limited; and just now she would have preferred the Yellow Dwarf in a luxurious castle to Edgar Harrowby and this cold, bleak, misty fell-side wilderness of bog and shingle.

Bitter thoughts like these, crudely spoken, coldly heard, did not help to make their miserable situation more tolerable; but they stripped off the disguise which had been carved out by fitness and showed her own soul nakedly to herself—and to Edgar as well. It was like tearing away a beautiful veil from a hideous object to hear her bitter reproaches, her still more bitter regrets. It made Edgar feel as if all life had suddenly become a lie—as if he had lived until now in a dream, and had just

awakened out of it; yet he recognised in himself a strange kind of indifference to the discovery, as if he had known all through his dream that he had not married Adelaide Birkett for love, nor yet believing in her love for him. He had dreamt that he had; but even in his dream he had not been persuaded.

Conventional fitness is a fine basis for a marriage, in its own way; but then the marriage must remain in the conventional groove. When you come to love and the elemental facts of human nature, to possible death on a bleak fell-side, and to circumstances which do not admit of posturing, then the conventional fitness is nowhere, and the gap where love ought to be, and is not, is the chief thing visible.

This miserable state of things lasted for hours that seemed an eternity, and then, as the evening came on, the mist lightened and gradually dispersed, so that Edgar could see where they were, and something of the surrounding country. They were on the top, or rather on the slope, of a fell. About two miles and a half below them lay a small cluster of houses; about half a mile off one solitary square stone house, pitched straight before them on the descent. There was not another human habitation to be seen, save one, a little shieling on the ascent opposite to where they stood. Here too was a road—as Edgar conjectured, the road which led from this little hamlet below to Caldbeck and the world beyond.

"Can you exert yourself so much as to get to this house below us?" Edgar asked, speaking to his wife with a certain distant, chilling courtesy that made her wince more than his anger would have done.

Now that she was saved and was not going to die on the fell-side, how sorry she was that she had let her true mind be seen! But men are foolish creatures in the hands of a clever woman; and she would, maybe, recover by tact all that she had lost by impatience.

She put her hand over her eyes, as if to clear them.

"Yes, with your arm," she answered with a deep sigh, suggestive of flinging off a weight and coming to herself. "I think I have been a little delirious!" she then said plaintively, and again cleared her eyes and again sighed deeply.

"It has been a trying time," said Edgar coldly, offering his hand; "but come, you had better not sit longer. Let us take advantage of this break, and make the best of our way to the house below."

He spoke quietly, but with the air of a man who does what he should out of self-respect, not love, and whose tenderness is not personal so much as official.

"How good you are!" said Adelaide prettily, as she laid both her hands in his, and with pain and difficulty rose to her feet.

He made no answer, but drew her hand on his arm and, always carefully tending her, always helping and protecting her, went in unbroken silence down the half-mile intervening between them and Windy Brow. And as Adelaide was really stiff and tired and uncomfortable, she left



off trying to coax him, and nursed her misery and displeasure in a silence as unbroken as his own.

It was dusk when they opened the broken gate hanging on one hinge more like a gap than a guard between the dilapidated fences, and passed up the weed-grown path lying by the side of the potato patch and the cabbages, in full view of the windows of the sitting-room. As they came up Edgar's quick eyes saw a figure dressed in grey, with a dead-white face, pass swiftly by the window; and as he knocked at the door he heard an inner door hastily locked. Stories of murderers and maniacs flashed across Adelaide's mind, who also had seen the fitting figure and heard the hasty locking of the inner door. She clung to Edgar tremulously.

"Shall we venture in?" she whispered.

"Do you desire not?" he asked. "Shall we go farther? I am at your service."

She looked at him angrily. The cold politeness of his tone seemed to divorce them more than the rudest anger would have done, and she resented his resentment as an offence which might well annoy her.

"No," she said haughtily. "We will go in. You can take care of me if there is any danger."

"And if I have to take care of myself?" he asked, with a certain mocking accent that was, to say the least of it, unpleasant.

"Your first duty is to me," replied Adelaide with intense insolence and command.

Besides, though a coward, she was dead tired at the moment; and of the two fatigue was stronger than fear.

Red-armed, red-haired, touzled Jenny opened the door on the two battered dripping strangers standing in the dusk without. She glowered at them as if they had been spirits fashioned by the mist, ghosts of the dead newly risen; or as if they had been brigands and burglars with designs on her own poor savings and her mistress's fabulous hoards.

"We have lost our way on the mountains; can you give us shelter?" asked Edgar in that rich voice which was one of his personal charms, and with that indescribable accent of an English gentleman accustomed to command.

"I'll ast t' mistress," was Jenny's reply, the door held cautiously ajar.

"Jenny!" cried Miss Gryce from some unknown depths, "what's astir? What's to do at the street door? Who are you chattering with? Come away, I say! It's no kind of night to be hivering at the street door with a pack of idle vagabones. Come in, I say, and shut up."

"We have lost our way on the moor," said Edgar in a louder voice. "Cannot you give us shelter?"

And Adelaide's smaller treble added, "You must not shut the door. You must let us in!"

At the sound of a woman's voice, Miss Gryce, who had a heart though

it had to be somewhat skilfully dug for, came out from the kitchen where she had been spending the last hour in economising the fraction of a farthing, and went to the door to see and judge of these new comers for herself. And Leam upstairs in her own room, standing rigid, struck to stone by her bedside, heard Edgar Harrowby and Adelaide Birkett brought into the house, and preparations set afloat for their fit shelter and reception.

Locked in her own room she was left in peace. She was not of much use at any time when practical work was about; and since this strange weakness which had taken such possession of her, she was even of less use than before. Miss Gryce therefore left her to herself, hoping that she slept. But she heard all that happened as clearly as if she had been on the spot. Her senses, sharpened to unnatural activity, told her everything that was said and done, as if no such impediments as closed doors or hindering walls stood between them. She heard all that Edgar said by way of explanation to Miss Gryce; how that they had left the carriage at a certain part of the road to join it again by a short cut over the fell; how that then the mist had come up and enveloped them; and how that they had wandered they knew not how, nor where, nor whence, till they had fallen on this place; she knew how Miss Gryce looked when she took snuff and their measure at the same time; and how Edgar looked—bold, commanding, manful—with Adelaide's fair, impassive face quietly accepting homage as her due and care and protection as her right. And then she heard Adelaide's feet on the stairs, and knew when she was ushered into the room—next her own—where she was to take her rest and forget the fatigues and fears of her adventurous walk. She heard her fretful complaints and peevish bemoanings at the shortcomings of the accommodation, with Jenny's unintelligible replies, which only annoyed her more. She seemed to see as well as hear, and pictured the whole scene visibly—even to Jenny's kneeling on the floor and taking by main force the soaked boots from off the swollen blistered feet. Then the bewailings ceased. Adelaide, comforted by food, slept; and Edgar downstairs waited for a while before he too should take his rest, and forget for a few hours the new chapter of the heart which this walk in the mist had opened for his instruction. It was a chapter that he might have learnt slowly, by quiet unexciting passages; a thing to grow into like old age, or dyspepsia; or perhaps a thing to never learn, concealed as it would be by habit. But now that he had read, had learnt, he could not forget; and the lines would be on his memory for ever, the text on which his life would be reasoned and transacted from now to the end of time.

Ah! Leam Dundas had loved him! Even that flattering, smooth-tongued Violet, venal Violet whom he had left so suddenly these seven years ago, mad with jealousy and rage at what he believed to be her treachery—even she had loved him better than this!—but Leam, proud, shy, loyal Leam—Leam, so full of fire, so single-hearted, and so honourable, how she had loved him! Oh that this black spot had never been

on her young soul!—that he might have loved her to her life's end, as he had loved her for those few hours, and received from her for all time what she had given him then! So, thinking of Leam, beloved if accursed and abandoned, he fell into a light kind of slumber, sitting by the little window looking on to the broken gate and the rising ground beyond.

By this time the moon had risen white and wan. The thin vapour that yet hung about the frosty air was like a silver film of exquisite purity and delicate power, giving that ethereal, almost mournful beauty to everything on which it fell, such as one involuntarily associates with past sorrows and dead loves, with spiritual forms and a life beyond and higher than the coarse material life of the world. The house was as still as the grave. Everyone was in bed except Edgar and Leam; and all were sleeping but Leam.

Leam opened her mother's jewel-case. A fancy took her to touch once more the withered leaves of that spray of lemon plant, crumbled now to dust, which Edgar Harrowby had drawn playfully over her face under the cut-leaved hornbeam on the lawn. She took it in her hands; pressed it against her face; kissed it as if it had life and feeling to respond to her own; then softly unlocked her door and stole downstairs.

She would see him once, just once, at a distance, reverently, humbly; not intruding on his notice, only worshipping at a distance at the shrine which she had been too vile to keep as her own. There was no harm in it. She did not imagine that Adelaide was his wife. She took her presence there with him naturally, as that of a favourite friend and companion; and yet if, as she believed, only as a friend and companion, a pang seized her to think how soon he had forgotten her even so far; and yet, again, what was she that she should not be forgotten? It was right and good that he had set her aside so quickly. It was part of her punishment and she must bear it. Adelaide at the least was free from crime, and Adelaide loved him. Enlightened by her own heart, she knew now that the reason why the rector's daughter had hated her was because she had loved Edgar; her hatred had meant jealousy of his love, not hatred of herself, Leam apart from him. Yes, she loved him; but neither Adelaide nor anyone loved him as did she herself, poor outcast Leam! But she was a leper and he was a king, and the gulf between them was impassable.

Yet she must see him just this once more, herself unseen—she must offer for one little moment the voiceless worship of her secret love, and then go back into the darkness for ever—the darkness closing very near about her now!

Noiseless as a falling shadow she stole downstairs, and came to the door of the sitting-room where Edgar was. It stood ajar. She pushed it cautiously open, and saw Edgar Harrowby sitting by the window, his head on his hand, dreaming of her. The candle had burnt itself out, only the veiled moonlight streamed over the fell and moor, and cast a pale reflection into the room. It showed his noble head resting on his hand,

his face pale and beautiful as a tired god's. That beloved face! What pain and pleasure commingled it was to see him! She felt like one dead come back to earth watching the beloved, unseen of them and unsuspected. He was asleep. He would not feel her; he would not see nor know her; and shrouded as she was in the shadow, he could not recognise her if even he should awake. She must go near to him and do him reverence. He was her god, and she was a sinner kneeling before him.

She glided across the room; knelt for a minute by his side, and bent her lips on the hand resting on his knee.

Edgar stirred drowsily in his sleep. What was this?—a touch, a perfume, a presence he seemed to remember! Who was there? He started up and roused himself. Did his eyesight mock him? Surely he saw a grey figure steal through the open doorway in the shadow; the scent of lemon-plant was about him; and on his hand—what was this? a tear? whose?

But he heard and knew no more. His dreams had given him Leam; only his dreams! Then he sighed and shook himself clear of the haunting thought, and so wearily went upstairs; only a thin partition separating him, sleeping, from Leam Dundas, waking—Leam, who recognised then the fact, which she had not understood before, that he and Adelaide were man and wife.

Forgotten, discarded, so soon indeed! Poor Leam! Now for the first time she felt that the bitterness of her punishment almost equalled the shame of her guilt.

#### CHAPTER XXIV.

#### THE DAY OF REST.

THE church-clock sounded one, and the land had entered into the Sabbath of its rest; but there was no rest for Leam. She could not go to bed, for she dared not trust herself to sleep even if she could have slept; and she felt as if she should die of suffocation if she attempted to lie down. She sat in her quiet tense way by the window, looking out on the moonlight and the frosty vapour; and then she turned again to her mother's jewel-case and took out the spray of lemon-plant, now turned to dust like her hopes, her happiness, intending to destroy it for ever; for how should she keep a love relic of Adelaide's husband?—and in taking it out she lifted some of her mother's jewels.

That beloved mother! how vividly she remembered her, how passionately she loved her still! Perhaps she loved her even more in that she had committed this crime for her, in that she had sacrificed her life here and her soul hereafter, for the false thought, if the true feeling, of guarding and protecting her. How well she remembered the day when she wore these coral beads—and that when she hung her, Leam's,

little neck and arms with these strings of pearls! She heard her say again when her father gave her these golden coins, and when her husband, that false-hearted Sebastian, mockery of a saint, had bought those rubies and those sapphires. For an hour and more Leam handled these jewels to chase away the consciousness of Edgar in memories of her mother; but at last the effort became more than she could bear, and the attempt died out in a sob. As she was putting away the sapphires, she inadvertently touched the secret spring, which had got strained and weakened and of the existence of which she had hitherto been ignorant, and thus dropped the division which hid the back of the case from the ordinary looker-in. There fell forward, with the division, a large and heavy green velvet pocketbook, with the initials V. E. H. embroidered in raised gold-work on the cover.

Surprised, she opened the book and came upon letters written in Edgar's handwriting to a certain "beloved Violet"—a certain Mrs. Harrington whom he called "love," and "life," and "darling wife," and "best beloved;" to a photograph of himself inscribed to his "darling Violet;" to a photograph of Madame—not in weeds—subscribed also "darling Violet"; to one of himself and Madame in a confiding attitude together; and to one of Fina, when she was about five months old, with "For her father, Edgar Harrowby," in Madame's handwriting. She read the first letters, half bewildered, scarcely understanding the full meaning of her discovery; not taking in what she read, but seeming to herself to be reading some horrible nightmare story. Then by slow degrees the truth came to her, burning itself into her brain, mounting in crimson to her cheeks; shame, horror, despair, all battling in her poor heart together as she grew to a clear understanding of Madame's shameful secret and Edgar's hidden life.

And she—she had been really nothing to him!—only a plaything, an occasion like the rest! First Madame, then herself, now Adelaide! Is this the kind of thing men call love? It would seem so, judging from him and from her own father. But it was not what Leam, in the narrow limits of her ignorant purity, cared to dignify by that name. Love was something single, true, and pure; and this—! She had no word by which to call it. Neither her experience nor her vocabulary compassed the life and sentiments of such a man as Edgar Harrowby; nor could she understand how, with such a life, such sentiments, could exist any nobleness or manly worth. How could it have been? He, so good and great as he always seemed, how could he have lived this hideous life of falsehood and treachery and deceit?—pretending love now here, now there, first to one and then to another—pretending what he could not possibly feel!

These swift changes, these facile inconstancies, to a girl like Leam, so tenacious and single-hearted, were inexpiable crimes; and in such a man as to her imagination Edgar Harrowby was—knightly hero, noble saint, a very demigod—utterly incomprehensible. Edgar, when

she had confessed her crime to him, had not felt more instinctively revolted than she did now, when she discovered the reality of his career, and laid bare his infidelities. Her brain seemed on fire, her heart was broken. The only thought possessing her was how to escape from the house where he was sleeping, with his wife, not six feet from where she stood. She felt it a kind of dishonour to breathe the same air as himself. She knew too much to stay under the same roof with him, even as one apart, unknown and dead.

But, bad as he was, she loved him, and she would destroy this record of his guilt. No one but herself should ever know how deeply he had sinned. She would take that pocket-book far out on the fell, and bury it deep among the heather, where man should never find it; and thus keep his secret safe and his name still honoured. It was the last thing that she could do for him. She had loved him; for that love's sake she had sacrificed herself, and to keep his honour untouched had renounced him; and now she would shield him from discovery, and bury the evidence of his shame and sin out of the sight and ken of all till the Day of Judgment should reveal it. Poor Leam! what grief and what delusion her two great loves had brought her!

The house was still buried in sleep. Once she heard Adelaide move uneasily on her pillow and moan; and once Edgar woke up with a start and a deep-drawn breath, like a man dreaming of pain. But these sounds soon dropped into absolute quiet, and the house fell again into the stillness of a tomb. The silver mist still hung like a veil between earth and sky, and the world without was as noiseless as the world within. For the second time Leam stole softly down the stairs, unslid the bolts and bars, and passed out into the silence, the cold mist, and the dim distance.

She did not know where she went nor when she meant to stop. She had but one feeling—to escape; but one design—to hide for ever the evidence of Edgar's crime. So she went on, stumbling wildly up the rough fell road; when she halted and staggered and fell.

The morning broke soft and grey in a peaceful but not brilliant nor jocund Sabbath; a day which seemed like the subdued and tender echo of yesterday's bitterness of sorrow, bringing rest if not joy, and where, if there were no smiles, there were no tears. Haunted by his dreams, which had given him Leam always, Leam only, Edgar rose early and wandered about the place, taking the downward village way; but save their own carriage standing by the door of the "Blucher," he saw nothing of any interest to him. He was glad however to see the carriage, so that they could leave their homely shelter and push on to Carlisle. He was ill at ease here;—ah! should he ever be more content? Had not he too parted with his summer, his sunshine, his happiness, and come into the grey gloom of eternal sorrow?

When he went back to the house he found Adelaide in deep distress about her flounces, torn, muddy, destroyed. Her soul lived in her ward-



robe; dress was her life; and the destruction of her pretty travelling-gown was to her an infliction quite as terrible in its own way as the destruction to Leam of her ideal, or as had been to Edgar the discovery of her guilt.

How could she wear such a rag as this? she said weeping, when her husband entered her room. What a miserable journey they had had! what a day it had been altogether! And this dreadful house—this room!—Look at the dirty windows, thick with dust and cobwebs—they could not have been cleaned for a year; the soiled curtains, the patched uncleanly counterpane; and, weeping afresh, her horrible gown!

To Adelaide, speckless, spotless Adelaide, dirt and disorder were crimes in those about her; when they touched herself they were degradation so deep as to be on a level with immorality.

Edgar listened to her lamentations with a man's wonder at a woman's personal woes; then quietly told her that he had sent for the carriage, which had put up at the village, and that she would soon have her maid and her travelling trunk, and so be out of her millinery misery. This so far consoled her that she left off weeping; though she still bewailed herself, and held that she had been specially ill-used of him and fate; she had her list of grievances off by heart, and she was minded that Edgar should learn to the full what she had suffered, and in that learning perhaps forget what she had inflicted.

It was strange how her comparatively small discomforts and not surprising peevishness jarred on her husband to-day. At one time he would have laughed, and comforted her with a man's good-humoured superiority to such minor matters as lace and muslin. Perhaps he would have liked her all the better for her person; it was so far flattering to him. But to-day her petulance wore another aspect altogether, and set him at odds with her more than before. It was like the intrusion of the petty miseries and mean annoyances of daily life into the solemn story of a tragedy, the tender strains of a threnody; as indeed it was too truly!

Still perplexed at that vision of last night, and haunted by a mad idea which he could not dominate—feeling the presence of Leam, though he knew that she was not here, could not possibly by any jugglery of events, as he believed, be here—Edgar asked their uncouth hostess carelessly at their homely breakfast if she had anyone living with her beside the servant?

"Only a sort of a niece," said Keziah. "A kind of adopted daughter of my brother Emmanuel."

"Emmanuel! That is an unusual name," said Edgar.

"Aye, it's not a common sort, I reckon," she said. "Nor is our surname. Emmanuel Gryce isn't a name as is picked up at every street corner."

She laughed as she spoke. Like most Northerners, she had a large amount of family pride.

Edgar felt his face grow pale.

"Does your brother Emmanuel Gryce live at North Aston?" he asked.

"Aye, that's where he is just now, though he's a sad rambling sort of a body, and never bides long anywhere. But that's his home just now. Do you happen to know him?"

"Yes," said Edgar. "We live at North Aston, my wife and I. And your niece, his adopted daughter, is her name Gryce too?"

"No, she's one Leonora Darley," said Keziah, suspecting nothing. "I don't know where he fished her up, nor who are her forbears, but that's the name she goes by."

"Is she in the house?" he asked, looking down on his plate, not daring to trust his eyes, scarcely able to command his voice; Adelaide's cold blue eyes looking at him half in surprise, half in suspicion.

"Yes, she is in the house sure enough, abed," answered Keziah. "She is only in bad health, isn't the poor lass, and when she's a mind to asleep we let her. She's not oft so late as this, and I'll be rousing her by-and-by."

"What is the matter with her health?" he asked.

"Eh, who knows! Your bits of lasses are always ailing," said Keziah. "Mayhap a love trouble—most like. She's close though, and has not told me aught."

"You are wonderfully inquisitive about this young lady," said Adelaide with a forced laugh. "What interest can a perfect stranger have for you?"

But she too felt uneasy. It was not that she formulated Leam distinctly; nevertheless, there was a dim kind of fear, a nameless suspicion, and the image of Leam like a shadow in the background. She was not dead; this dreadful woman was the sister of that strange Mr. Gryce of Lionnet; and there was an adopted daughter of evidently unknown antecedents in bad health, living with her, and invisible. So far she could piece together the fragments of the mystery, and so far she was uneasy. How she longed to get away from this place! She had felt there was danger in it when she passed through the gates and stood by the door! Would the carriage never come? Should they never be able to escape?

No more however was said or done. Edgar held his peace. Being a man, a woman's sneer could control him, and the carriage, which had stopped at Monk Grange overnight, as we know, soon after this came up to take them on their journey. To Adelaide's unspeakable relief they got in without more being said of Miss Leonora Darley, Mr. Gryce's adopted daughter; and they set off leaving Miss Gryce so much impressed by their grandeur, and tumbled Jenny so much taken up by their liberality, as to cause both to forget poor Leam's continued absence, strange as it was to her habits.

But Edgar regretted that they went without seeing this adopted

niece. It would have set his mind at rest if he had seen her. Now the moonlight vision that had come to him between sleeping and waking, that scent of lemon-plant, that tear on his hand, would ever remain a mystery, an undying fear, and a lifelong pain.

They wound slowly up the rough, steep, fell-side road; and presently Edgar, to lighten the load and also to free himself from Adelaide's presence for a time, got out to walk up the hill, and soon drew far ahead of the lumbering carriage.

As he walked on he saw at a distance something grey by the way-side. Backed by the russet-brown of the dying bracken, and the gold of the late gorse, that something grey came out in strange distinctness. Was it a stone jutting out into the roadway? No; it was not a stone; it looked more like a human figure than a rock.

He quickened his pace, walking rapidly. The village bells were chiming up from the church at the fell-foot, calling the weary workers to the Sabbath-day devotions, the peaceful service of the day of rest; the scattered sheep on the fell-side were bleating to each other, the faithful colliers barking, and the distant cattle lowing. But all these sounds were far off and subdued, mere echoes of the life afar; near at hand it was absolute stillness—a stillness in fit accord with the sunless sky and the grey, dim, sombre day.

Edgar walked fast, ever faster; and now had distanced the carriage by half a mile or more. He came nearer, nearer to the figure lying on the road; and now so near that he knew it to be a woman, young, slight, with dark hair—a woman of condition, not a tramp nor a peasant.

A little child from a hind's hut near stood beside that prostrate figure. The freshening wind blew back the sunny curls from the wondering rosy face, and drove into a little cloud the clean white Sunday frock, with the bits of blue about the arms to mark the mother's loving pride in her child. Her dimpled hands were full of withered fern and dying heather, of ox-eye daisies and golden-headed ragwort. She had scattered handfuls over the woman lying asleep there by the wayside, but now she was standing wondering why she laid so still, and did not awake when she was called.

Edgar, breathless, heart-struck, knowing full well what was before him, strode up to the sleeping woman. He knelt on one knee and gently lifted the hidden face, the helpless body; pressing to his bosom tenderly, reverently, the dear head of his dead love. As he moved the body he drew her hand from the heather where it had been thrust, and took from it, clutched tight and rigid with death, the green velvet pocket-book which he had given seven years ago to Violet Cray—when they lived in St. John's Wood, under the name of Harrington.

He took it from her hand and concealed it in his own breast, hiding it just in time from Adelaide, coming up in the carriage.

She stopped and got out to find him thus—kneeling on one knee, supporting the dead body of Leam Dundas, holding to his breast the

pale dead face wet with his passionate tears, unresponsive to his despairing caresses.

Adelaide laid her hand lightly on his shoulder.

"Is this manly?" she said in a cold voice. "You knew that she was here!"

"Do not speak of her!" he answered bitterly, turning away his head. "She loved me, and she is dead!"

"Dead!" she echoed, as much displeasure as natural horror in her voice.

It was an offence to one like Adelaide that the girl whom she had always hated, but who had been in a sense her equal and companion, should have died with this tragic unconventionality—a poor lost creature lying by the wayside, like one of the waifs of the world for whom is neither love nor care, neither respectability nor decency. When people of Leam's condition die they should die in their beds, decently as befits the rational and well conducted, not out on a wild fell-top, drenched with the mists of night and stiffened stark with its frosts!

She made a movement as if she would have spoken; but Edgar, who read her heart, thrust her almost savagely aside.

"Silence!" he said. "You shall not blaspheme her! She was true and faithful, and if she sinned she has suffered and will be forgiven. She loved me—but she lies here;—and you are my wife!"

He bent his head and again kissed the pale face on his breast; then lifted her reverently to place her in the carriage.

As he stood up with his pitiful burden the church bells ceased ringing; and Alick, in his place, began the Morning Service with these words:

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise."

THE END OF "LEAM DUNDAS."

